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THE ETHICS OF JESUS AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

CHARLES S. GARDNER

The Ethics of Jesus and Social Progress

By

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TO

Ariadne Turner Gardner

IN AFFECTIONATE ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF
WHAT I OWE TO HER LOVING COM-
PANIONSHIP, PURE TASTE AND
HIGH IDEALISM.

PREFACE

For some years it has been my pleasant task to instruct a group of young ministers in the Ethics of Jesus. At the same time I have been pursuing special studies in the science of Sociology, if it may be called a science—and with certain qualifications it may be fairly regarded as such; at any rate, it is the most important field of scientific study which now engages the attention of men. This book is the resultant of the convergence of these two lines of study and teaching. The two questions to which I have sought to give an answer are, first, What sort of society would the ethical principles of Jesus result in if actually reduced to practice? Second, How far would such a social organization correspond to the goal of social development as the trend of that development is made apparent by Sociology? My conviction is that the more definitely the goal of social evolution is worked out by the students of social science, and the more adequately the concept of the Kingdom of God is grasped by the students of the gospel, the more nearly they will be found to correspond.

Some readers, perhaps, will regard it as a serious defect that so little attention is given to the problems of criticism. The critical questions

involved are so numerous, the difficulty in reaching a definite conclusion as to some of them is so great, and so much time and space would be required for a thorough discussion of them—were I prepared to throw any additional light upon them—that no adequate space would have been left to develop the specific theme which this book undertakes to discuss. Those who wish to study the bearing upon the ethical teaching Jesus of current critical thought are referred to Dr. King's "Ethics of Jesus," in which he gives an excellent summary of the theories now most prominently advocated, and finds that the essential principles of that teaching are embedded in those parts of the gospel records which even such a radical critic as Schmiedel leaves intact.

It is my earnest hope that this book may prove to be not altogether useless in the effort of this generation to grasp more comprehensively the social meaning of Christianity and to organize society according to its principles.

C. S. Gardner.

Louisville, Ky., November 20, 1913.

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THE ETHICS OF JESUS AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

INTRODUCTION

One is continually impressed these days with the universal interest in the matter of social adjustment. The press groans with literature discussing the social question—books, magazines, newspapers innumerable, treating every phase of it, in every possible mood, from every conceivable angle of vision, and with every imaginable grade of mental ability. It is a subject of animated conversation wherever men meet. You hear it on the train, in the parlour, around the dinner table, at the club, and sometimes it slips in among the jests and hilarities of the ballground and the golf links. The interest is not confined to any occupation or class or sex. The loafer on the streets, the labourer in the shop, the capitalist in his office, the minister in his study, the scholar in his library, the mother in the nursery, have their attention focused on the problem of social improvement. Men of low and high degree, who think at all, are thinking to-day in social terms, no matter what the subject of their thought may be. Probably never before in the history of the world were the minds of men, in a time of peace, so universally dominated by one great idea as they are now by this, in all the leading countries of the earth. For the interest is universal, not only in the sense

that it involves all classes of the population, but in the sense that it extends throughout all the nations of the civilized world. It envelops the planet. In the Americas, England, France, Germany, Austria, Italy, Russia, Turkey, India, China, Japan, the people are astir about questions which all root themselves in this great problem.

This social interest is a serious one. It is not a temporary, passing fad, as some have affected to think. It draws deep. The most powerful emotions of the human heart are evoked by it, and the mightiest forces are called into play. Individual and corporate selfishness runs through the whole situation; but at bottom a deep ethical unrest is the source whence the agitation springs. That it is no ephemeral craze which can be explained by "the psychology of the crowd" is manifest if a moment's consideration be given to the profound causes which have given rise to it. On the one hand, there is a new and higher valuation of the common man, which in large part is easily traceable to a deeper and more adequate realization of the meaning of the Christian religion. On the other hand, society has reached a stage of development which gives new aspects to the whole problem of social adjustment. Few people have realized the significance of the fact that the habitable areas of the earth have now practically all been occupied. Hitherto, when the population became so dense that the competitive

struggle for existence became too intense for the weaker members of society to survive, they were either trodden down into the misery of slow starvation and extinction, or the pressure was relieved by emigration to new and virgin lands. Now these old methods of solving the problem are becoming impracticable. The crushing of the unfortunate in the struggle is forbidden by an ever more emphatic protest of the new Christian conscience, which invests every common life with infinite sacredness; the method of relief by emigration to open lands is about to be rendered impossible by stern physical limitations. There are yet left some comparatively unoccupied spaces, but they are rapidly filling up.

The consequence is that the struggle for existence is intensified at the very same time that adjustment by the ruthless exercise of strength is becoming morally repulsive. We can no longer leave the weak man to his unhappy fate of starvation or extinction in the struggle, without committing an outrage upon our own moral sensibilities; and he can no longer relieve the situation by escaping to free regions where there is plenty of room. With an increasing sense of the preciousness of the most insignificant human life, men must live and work out their destinies together in increasingly dense masses, unless the increase of population is to stop. Not only must they live together in increasingly dense masses, but must do so under conditions that are more and more

humanly controlled. There is no more characteristic feature of the life of our time than the consciousness that men, acting collectively, are masters of their own environment in a measure never dreamed of in any past age. Actual social conditions are no longer accepted as fate or as the determination of a superhuman power which it is folly or impiety to resist or to criticise. The release of the will from this paralyzing fatalism and passive acceptance of actual conditions has naturally been accompanied by a great outburst of discontent and of social idealism. It is the conjunction of these several conditions, moral and physical, which has made the social problem the burning issue of this age. The agitation is not an accident, nor a superficial excitement induced by the craft of skillful and designing agitators. The essential problem of human life itself is involved. It is, in the last analysis, a religious question; and there is a growing recognition of the fact that no more solemn challenge was ever presented to our Christianity.

Not only is the interest in this question universal and profoundly serious, but it is increasingly intelligent. It attracts, more and more, the systematic study of the profoundest minds of the age. Many of them have set for themselves the task of studying the whole process of social development in order to discover and formulate the general principles that underlie the experiences of men as social beings; and out of this manifold

experience to gather the knowledge which will illuminate the problems of the present and of the future. In this way it is hoped that society can be so enlightened, so equipped with positive knowledge, as rationally to control its further development. Hitherto men have, for the most part, groped in their social experience, guided by flickering lights, only dimly conscious at best of the significance of their social relations; and, being at once gripped by blind custom and impelled by blind needs from behind, have had little foresight of the end toward which as a collective body they were moving. Like so many automobiles without headlights, the great human groups have plunged onward into the darkness of the future, and it is no wonder that catastrophes and tragedies have marked the way. Out of the vast and varied experience of mankind in associated life, is it not possible to gather wisdom which, like a great headlight, will enable society to guide its course toward the goal of universal well-being? This is a great undertaking, and it cannot be accomplished without bringing into requisition all the capacities and resources of human intelligence.

Out of this effort has grown a new science, which is yet in the formative stage, but which is already working out a body of knowledge that will prove of inestimable value in guiding practical adjustments. That science is without any religious presuppositions, and began, indeed, in a spirit rather antagonistic than favourable to re-

ligion, but has been coming steadily into an attitude more friendly to Christianity. Whatever may be the attitude of individual investigators, the practical conclusions to which their investigations are pointing are in harmony with the demands of Christianity interpreted as a social religion.

One of the most striking aspects of the present situation is the new sense of the social implications of Christianity. The new science has wonderfully enriched our conception of men as social beings. Men are no longer thought of as so many distinct, separate, independent beings, with only external and, for the most part, accidental relations with others, each working out his own destiny for himself. Each human being is now seen to be a focal center in which innumerable influences, material, intellectual and spiritual, both past and present, converge, and then in new forms radiate out into the present and future. Like the individual notes in a strain of music, each person is distinct from others; but as the notes combine to make harmony or discord, so these conscious beings find the meaning of their lives in their relations with one another.

When with this consciousness of the social meaning of personality one turns to the gospel, he sees a larger and deeper meaning in the great words that were dear to him before, but now become doubly dear—love, righteousness, atonement, salvation, the Kingdom of God. Thus, the

new science of social relations has opened new and rich fields of thought for the students of Christian ethics and theology, who are beginning to feel that one of the great religious tasks of this generation is the proper correlation of Christianity and social science in their common task of guiding society toward the goal of universal righteousness. For, if the Christian enterprise needs to utilize the contributions of social science, the latter no less needs the inspiration of the Christian ideal. The Sociology that ignores or discredits Christianity is sure in the long run to fail in its effort to give an adequate theoretical account of human society. It will inevitably drift toward a materialistic and necessitarian interpretation of life, in which the human mind can never rest, simply because it is *human;* and it will also fail in its practical purpose of guiding social adjustments toward an ideal, because it will not be able to call to its aid the profound religious emotions of the heart. This book is written in the firm conviction that in a proper correlation of social science and the religion of Jesus, the former will be lifted to a larger and more adequate conception of the phenomena it seeks to interpret; and the deeper meaning of the latter will be disclosed to the great enrichment of Christian thought and the stimulation of Christian effort.

It need hardly be said, however, that it is not the purpose of this book to undertake to set forth,

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even in outline, the whole content of the doctrine of Jesus. His religion contemplates man as more than a denizen of time; it looks upon him as a citizen of eternity. A religion which adequately meets his needs as a being who stands in eternal relations and is destined to individual immortality must include in its scope more than a principle and program of social adjustment within the realms of time and sense. There are, therefore, phases of the religion of Jesus which do not come within the compass of this book; but, since the life of a man is a unity of many factors which are continually reacting on one another, and a continuity of sequences, each of which conditions that which follows, the social phase and significance of religion cannot be neglected without impairing the beauty, the harmony and the adequacy of it all.

SKETCH OF PRELIMINARY DEVELOPMENT

I. Kinship Groups.—In order to understand and appreciate the social significance of the work of Jesus, it is important to view it against the background of the previous development of society. His work was, and is, intimately related to the whole social history of mankind. So far from being an isolated and unrelated phenomenon, his life and teaching may be taken as the best point of observation for a comprehensive survey of the whole course of social development. It is, of course, not the purpose of this book to undertake such a comprehensive survey; but in the conviction that the work of Jesus cannot be adequately interpreted unless viewed in proper relation to the previous social experience of mankind, it is deemed best to begin by briefly outlining that experience. It may seem a far call from the remote social origins of the primeval world to the work of Jesus; but if the reader will have patience to follow the sketch of social development from the beginning, as presented in this chapter, he will, it is believed, see a relation between the two which justifies this method.

So far as definite information is obtainable as to the forms of associated life in the earliest times, men dwelt together in small kinship-groups.

These little bands led a relatively isolated life and developed peculiarities of look, of speech, and of mode of life; but though relatively isolated from human kind, must occasionally have come in contact with other groups, which had likewise become peculiar in look and speech and custom. When they met, hostility was usually the result. Originally the word for "stranger" was practically synonymous with that for enemy. Beyond the limits of the kinship-group there was little or no sense of community of life. The "consciousness of kind" did not extend beyond the limits of common speech and custom, and the sense of moral obligation was felt only within those limits. There was no sense of duty to the stranger as such. Hospitality was enjoined and practiced, but the basis of this injunction in primitive society seems not to have been a sense of obligation to treat kindly one's fellow-men; in fact, the stranger was hardly felt to be a *fellow-man;* the fellow feeling being limited to those of one's own blood. It not unfrequently happened that the stranger who was hospitably entertained under the roof was killed by the host after he had departed. This singular paradox is probably to be explained by the notion of magic, so prevalent among primitive peoples.

The organization of the kinship-group was rudimentary. It was a small aggregation, and led for the most part a monotonous life. The crises that occurred were rare and were due prin-

cipally to changes in natural conditions or to conflict with other clans or tribes. There were leaders for such crises, but leadership usually coincided with age and experience, and was at first concentrated in the man who stood at the head of the little band. Of course, this general function was divided and distributed among several men as the clan enlarged and its organization developed; but at first this organization was extremely simple. The highly complex and many-sided social structure of later ages existed only in germ. The structure of the kinship-group bore about the same relation to the organization of modern society as the acorn does to the oak tree.

There was present in the clan the beginning of political authority, and this was more highly developed in the tribe. But, for the most part, custom was the means or method of social control. The life of those early groups was comparatively uneventful and monotonous. The stream of life flowed along in the same channel from generation to generation. New ideas rarely intruded, and were as rarely accepted when they did. New modes of life, new ways of doing things, were seldom observed, because of the rarity of peaceful contact with other peoples, and seemed always to be violations of a sacred order. If some bold individual originated a new way of doing, he was in danger of paying for his temerity with his life. One of the chief duties of parenthood was to train the children in the traditions;

and the aged leaders considered it their chief business to guide the people in the ancient ways. Custom has been described as a hard cake that forms over the life of a people. With a group of people that live an isolated and monotonous life this cake deepens and hardens with time; and modes of life which have been handed down from past generations seem to them sacred, necessary, inviolable. Custom grows in sacredness and in rigidity with the length of time that it prevails undisturbed and unchallenged. It covers and regulates nearly all the activities of the day, extending to minute details of action. The violation of any of these regulations would appear to the primitive man to be an impiety which exposed him to dreadful consequences. Custom thus became a powerful imperative, resting with the weight of the whole past upon his mind, keeping the will in bondage, paralyzing initiative, and holding the personality in swaddling clothes. The assembly of elders, which regulated the affairs of the tribe, were themselves controlled by custom. They were, in fact, the custodians and guardians of the customs and sacred traditions.

We should naturally expect that under such life-conditions there would be but a low development of individuality. The average development of personality in a group rises with its increasing size and the complexity of its organization, supposing other things to be equal. This principle cannot here be elaborated and demonstrated;

but there is no principle of Sociology better established. Among primitive people the average individual personality was not highly developed, and did not count for much. The emphasis rested rather on the integrity and life of the community. All the conditions tended to place the emphasis there. It could not well have been otherwise. Only thus could the group be maintained and developed; and its development was the primary condition of the welfare of its members.

In primitive societies almost every act and thought was prescribed; if not by law, by custom, which penetrates into the minutiæ of life more deeply than law can. The assertion of an individual right against the community was very rare. It is quite true that the life of an individual in an advanced society is just as closely identified with the common life as in a backward society—the fundamental and essential relation between the two is the same; but the emphasis in consciousness is very differently placed. The social life may be described as an ellipse, one focus of which is the individual, and the other the group. In the primitive society the latter was central in consciousness; in the highly developed society it is the former.

But apart from the difference in emphasis upon the individual and the collective life, the individual as such was, on the average, less highly developed in primitive than in more advanced society. The movement of life was slower; the

circle of interests narrower. The mental stimulations were more rare; the occasions for personal choice and discrimination more seldom. Consciousness was less intense and alert, and the range and variety of experiences far more limited. These facts are evident; and it is equally evident that it was quite impossible under such conditions for individual personality to be on the average so highly developed as under the contrasting conditions of a highly complex society in which life is more intensely and variously stimulated and its latent capacities called forth. This is not to say that under such circumstances no strong and masterful personalities appeared. But it does mean that they were more rare, and that a larger proportion of the people were incapable of personal self-direction and fell more directly under the power of strong leadership. Probably also the men who were dominant in those small and backward groups were, as a rule, far less powerful, less highly developed in their individuality than the leaders of the larger and more advanced communities, and were more thoroughly dominated by custom. Everyday experience teaches that the great man of the village may be a small man in the metropolis. Just so, the leader of a clan or tribe, though he may stand out in striking preeminence among his tribesmen, must not, therefore, be assumed to posses an individuality and a personality of the same measure as the leader of a modern nation, though the latter may be far

from enjoying so absolute a transcendence over his contemporaries. The life of a small primitive group may be likened to a low, flat plain, with here and there a hill to relieve the monotony. The life of a highly developed society is like a table-land, whose general high level is broken by many lofty peaks and ranges.

For our purpose, the most interesting phase of the life of those early peoples is their religion, though only one aspect of it can here be emphasized. We have become accustomed to think of religion as a voluntary affair of the individual. In primitive societies it was primarily an affair of the clan or tribe. There were no clear lines of distinction between the group considered as a political body, as an economic body, and as a religious body. As a rule, the further back one goes, the more dim become these distinctions, until in the earliest stages of social development these several interests are scarcely distinguishable. The religious and political functions belonged to the same person or persons. One was born into the religion as he was born into the tribe. The god was regarded as standing in some sort of relation to the people as a unit. He was a divinity of the whole body politic; for this primarily he cared, and over its destinies he presided. For the individual as such he cared secondarily. As the object of the divine care the individual was regarded chiefly in his collective relations, and did not choose his religion any more than he did

his tribe. In all societies the social function of religion is to afford a divine sanction for human values, a divine protection and furtherance of human interests; and in a social state wherein not the individual but the collective life was the center of value on which consciousness was focused, it was natural and inevitable that the concern of religion would be concentrated on the same point. As one looks backward to the primitive social conditions, the individual seems to be more and more completely subordinated to or merged in the community. The religion was adapted to these conditions. It had respect primarily to the group, and to the individual chiefly as he was contemplated in his relations to that.

At this stage, religion, custom, art, law were not clearly separated in thought from one another. These great human interests, so distinct in our thought, were implicated in each other, or blended in a way which is rather confusing to a modern mind. Indeed, the fundamental characteristic of that early social life was simplicity rather than complexity of organization; in other words, the absence of distinction in the interests of life.

The chief social advantage of religion, therefore, in the earlier history of the race, seems to have been to afford a divine sanction for the customs handed down from the past. It exerted primarily a conservative influence, stereotyping life and rooting the traditions in a superhuman origin; and so tended to produce and maintain unity

and uniformity of life. Many sociologists ascribe no other value to religion even in the most advanced societies; but in this they err. Religion is bound up with man's ideals; religious conceptions are idealizations of the world. The primitive man's ideals were not only fashioned out of his past experience, as all men's are, but were supposed to have been realized in the past. This was true of all, especially of his social, ideals. As men advance in their development, their ideals, while still necessarily fashioned out of the mental materials gathered in experience, represent new combinations of these elements and are projected into the future as goals not yet reached, but to be striven for. As this change takes place religion ceases to be a merely conservative or stereotyping influence and becomes a renovating, reconstructive force. But at the period whose general social outlines are here sketched, religion was primarily an affair of the group, conserving its interests, consecrating customs the observance of which was thought to be the condition of its welfare, securing the conformity of the individual to commonly recognized standards of life, and so the unity and solidarity of the group. All the religions of the ancient world were of this type, and may be called "group religions" in contradistinction from the more individualistic conception of religion in modern times.

Of course, there is a sense in which religion is yet, and always will be, an affair of groups;

modern men of like religious views and sentiments are naturally drawn together and constitute associations of the voluntary type. Religion has always been and always will be a group-forming influence. But in primitive times the clan or tribe and the religious body were identical. The transference from one kinship-group to another was also a transference from one religion to another. When these clans developed into tribes and later into nationalities, the religions likewise developed into tribal and national cults. As the result of a long development, through the incorporation and amalgamation of many alien kinship-groups in one state, the sense of the blood-bond as the principle of political union disappeared; and then it became possible for men to distinguish in thought the religious from the political community. But the tendency to identify the two has been a persistent one, and in mediæval times it emerged again in the conception of a state religion. The two had, however, been so thoroughly dissociated in the epoch which saw the origin of Christianity that the ancient idea could not again be reinstated in its purity; for the union of church and state, while it was a revival of the ancient sentiment, was nevertheless not a perfect reproduction of the primitive notion. The pre-christian idea was not that of a *union* of a religious with a political institution, but rather that the kinship-group *was* a religious body and that the

state, developed out of the kinship-group, *was* a religious institution.

II. National Groups.—As before intimated, the clans of the primitive world developed into larger aggregations with a somewhat more complex organization. Through natural expansion by the increase of numbers; through amalgamation with other similar bodies, usually as the result of conflict and the subjugation of the one by the other; and through the absorption of alien elements in various ways, the tribes grew into states and nations. There thus arose in the ancient world three great nationalities into whose social characteristics and ideals it is necessary to get some insight in order to see in its proper historical setting and to estimate aright the social significance of the work of Jesus.

Let us begin with the Greeks. It is impossible to determine adequately the causes which led to the development on the Greek peninsula of the rich and splendid civilization which so early appeared there. It is probably to be accounted for, in part, by the peculiar geographical conditions, which were such as to afford an exceptionally protected situation and at the same time to promote the art of navigation, which brought the inhabitants into easy, frequent and stimulating contact with neighboring peoples. The climatic and economic conditions were also favorable, furnishing adequate stimulation to human faculties without

the oppressive severity which in more inhospitable climes made much slower and longer the process of achieving such a mastery of nature as would afford a basis for a high civilization. At any rate, we know that in that highly favoured and delightful habitat there early grew up a civilization which in many respects was quite remarkable. Some features of that civilization are of importance in this discussion.

First, there occurred a rapid and extensive development of the social structure, both in its political and economic phases. By peaceful absorption and by violent subjugation many alien elements were incorporated in the political body; trade and manufactures grew at a rapid pace as a natural result of extending communication both within and beyond the group. A corresponding development and diversification of all the interests of life took place.

Second, simultaneously with and partly conditioned by this national expansion, political organization and commercial activity, there took place a truly phenomenal development of the intellectual life. Such a development could hardly have occurred if the national life had not been enriched by a great increase in the number and variety of social relations; but clearly this alone cannot account for the remarkable efflorescence of the intellect which characterized Grecian civilization. Other conditions were exceptionally happy, and the rapid progress in social organization

seemed to afford the opportunity for the intensive action of all the other favourable influences. Athens became the brain of the ancient world. In the capacity for clear conception and discrimination the inhabitants of Attica have never been excelled. Their sense of form and proportion has perhaps never been equalled. Their philosophy has never been surpassed in its ambitious effort to give a rational explanation of the world. They were the inventors of the science of Logic, in which they reached a high degree of proficiency. They were the forerunners in the scientific study of nature; and Aristotle made considerable progress in the use of the method of observation, the wonderful scientific value of which was perceived at a later time by Bacon. The Greeks were the first people in the world to undertake a rational criticism of the ethical standards of conduct and the systematic analysis of the social order. Along with the Hebrews, who, as we shall see, approached the problem from a very different direction, they were the pioneers in the construction of social Utopias. In all lines of distinctively intellectual effort they were distinguished. It may well be questioned whether in an equal length of time and among a people of equal numbers there was ever so varied an intellectual activity, resulting in such splendid intellectual achievements, as marked the age of Pericles.

In the third place, from this advance in social life and intellectual endeavour there resulted

naturally a marked development of individuality in the population. The development of complex and varied social life always furnishes to men both the opportunity and the stimulation to follow each his individual bent and to call into exercise his peculiar personal capacities; while the growing intellect criticises tradition and examines custom to see if it has a rational justification, and so breaks the spell of sacredness which gives it unquestioned authority over conduct. The growing personality thus bursts the bond of tradition, which is useful and necessary in the primary stages of development, as the egg-shell is needed by the nascent chick; but at a later stage is a hindrance to growth. The progressive organization of society is an important objective, and the critical activity of the intellect an important subjective condition of setting free the potentialities of the individual.

We can see, therefore, why and how, among the Greeks, there grew up a new sense of the value of the individual. Personality asserted itself. They discovered that the ideals of life were not to be found in the past, borne down to them on the sacred stream of tradition; and constructed for themselves ethical and social ideals which became the goals of individual and collective effort under the guidance of reason and conscience. Freedom of thought gradually gained ascendancy among them; democracy worked as a ferment in the social order. Great thinkers

attained an elevation which permitted their own sympathies to flow beyond the limits of the ancient group boundaries; they gained a vision, broken and incomplete indeed, but still a vision of a universal humanity, embracing all peoples and tongues. Even the common people came to have in some measure the cosmopolitan breadth of view which usually accompanies democracy.

But, in the fourth place, the Greeks failed to attain to the complete emancipation of the individual. In the proudest period of their history their conception of individual human value was seriously defective. Their conception of a universal humanity was incomplete in two directions. First, their recognition of the full, complete, and equal humanity of the non-Greek peoples was not clear and without reservation, except, perhaps, on the part of some of their very greatest spirits. Even with their philosophers, such a recognition was more in the nature of an abstract intellectual theory than a concrete, practical, heartfelt fellowship with all men. In the general thought, the title of the barbarians to complete humanity was not admitted. The Greeks not only thought themselves a preferred human stock—this is too common a presumption of every racial stock, even until now—but they did not have a clear and keen sense of brotherhood with other human groups. Second, their class spirit was a still more serious limitation upon their sense of universal human brotherhood. Even their loftiest minds never

rose high enough to suspect that slavery was not a natural, necessary, and righteous factor of an ideal social order. With their radical democracy they combined a most degrading system of human servitude, which did not have even the poor excuse that it consisted in the subjection of a manifestly inferior race which was incapable of self-government. To the Greek mind the institution of slavery did not need any excuse or even palliation; it was the foundation of the ideal social order. It was an outstanding feature of the Utopian scheme of social organization constructed by the greatest of Greek minds. The fundamental principle of Plato's ideal social order was the rule of the wise, that is, the men of insight. It enthroned intellect. Below the philosophers was the warrior-citizen class, who defended the state and administered its affairs under the direction, of course, of the thinkers. Below this was the artisan or labouring class, which constituted the economic foundation of the state and performed the tasks of drudgery.

This, in bare outline, was the highest contribution of the Greek mind to social ideals. It was not without some elements of beauty and excellence; it exalted reason and proposed to subject all social activities to rational control; and the Greek notion was that rational and moral conduct coincide. But its defect is strikingly obvious. The masses of men were without personality and must be less than men in order that the few might

enjoy the real values of life. Nor was this felt to be an injustice inflicted upon the common people; it was not a destruction or degradation of personality; for, according to the Greek view, the masses did not possess personality, with its right to free development. That was the natural endowment of the few. The labourer was not commonly thought of as a man, in the true sense of the word. He was something intermediate between a man and a brute, partaking somewhat of the nature of both—superior to the brute in that he possessed certain human faculties which fitted him better to perform the services necessary to the dignified life of his master, but like the brute, having no other end than this. Individuality, personality, intrinsic worth, the right to think for one's self and to participate in the government of the state and in all the higher activities of life—these were blessings possessed in unequal degrees even by those who stood above the level of the servile class. The dignity and value of man *as man* those gifted people did not perceive, although both in their philosophy and in the democratic organization of their state they accepted principles which would seem logically to lead to this conclusion.

What is the explanation of this striking inconsistency, of which many people since their time have been guilty, though not in so notable a degree? Perhaps an entirely satisfactory answer cannot be given, but this is certain: no people have

ever attained or can ever attain to the appreciation of man simply as man, can ever clearly perceive, much less feel, the essential sacredness of every man and the real brotherhood of all men, without postulating an ethical personality as the ultimate principle of the universe; in a word, without ethical monotheism. The Grecian conception of the world was fatally defective just here. The Greeks peopled earth and sky with divinities which were all deficient in ethical quality. The morality of Olympus was hardly as elevated as that of the Areopagus. And back of this swarm of divinities—who seemed to obey no law of action higher than might and intrigue—loomed, indistinct yet substantial enough to cast its chilling shadow upon Olympus and the world of men, the ultimate principle, their real divinity, blind Fate or Necessity. With such a dark background for all their thinking, is it any wonder that that brilliant people failed to grasp with deep ethical feeling the intrinsic sacredness of personality and to perceive in every man simply as a man an immeasurable value?

If we should attempt still further explanation perhaps we should find that the reason why a people so gifted and so advanced halted short of this goal and seemed unable to go further, was that they attempted a more exclusively intellectual or rational solution of the problem of life than any other. Unquestionably the intellect has an important and indispensable function in solv-

ing the riddle of the universe; but when it undertakes the task alone it always and inevitably reaches an impersonal principle as the ultimate; and a universe which in its ultimate principle or cause is impersonal can never be the temple for the consecration of the personality of man nor the home of a universal ethical human brotherhood.

Here, then, the Greeks reached the limits of their social development. They made notable progress; their civilization achieved much both in the development of a social organization and in the individualization of men; but the latter process they were quite unable to carry to completion and were arrested therefore in the former. They could not wholly transcend the narrowness and exclusiveness of the ancient isolated group-life; they failed utterly to place the crown of dignity upon lowly men, and to feel the sacredness of simple humanity; they did not see with unclouded vision the essential glory of the human personality,—and their failure was due in part, certainly, to the fact that in attempting the solution of the problem of life by the rationalistic method they inevitably ended by making an impersonal entity the fundamental principle of the universe. After their brave beginning, social progress could go no further with them because it lacked a sufficient religious and ethical basis.

It is the fashion now in scientific circles to regard religion as a product or a resultant of the

social experience of a people. There is abundant reason, which cannot be elaborated here, to regard this as a very partial and one-sided account of the relation of religion to the social life. I grant that religion does reflect the social life; is, so to speak, an adumbratium or a sort of idealization of it projected into the heavens; but it can easily be shown that it is something more than a mere effect. Religion is also a powerful cause, a factor of first importance in fashioning the social life. If there is a defect in the religion, it reacts hurtfully upon the social development. In fact, in the social life, as in every evolving system of energies, there is no such thing as a mere effect. The action and reaction of forces is so complicated and far-reaching that every effect is also a cause and influences the whole system. We are, therefore, justified in maintaining that a people who have a fatally defective religion either will inevitably suffer an arrest in their development or their development must be turned into a channel which leads ultimately to decadence. The Greeks had a religion which was thus defective, which did not exalt the ethical and personal by postulating an ethical personality as the central being of the universe. It did not, therefore, contain the moral principle which alone is adequate to the organization of a universal brotherhood of man.

The development of the Hebrew group exhibits peculiar features of special sociological in-

terest. For some reason the ethical values received the main emphasis in the development of this people. The orthodox explanation of this fact is that in the beginning of their history and from time to time throughout their career their leaders were the recipients of special divine revelations. Attempts have been made to find in certain peculiar incidents of Hebrew history a purely naturalistic explanation of the striking ethical quality of that religion, and such efforts have cast much valuable light upon the problem. But to a candid judgment this explanation is not entirely satisfying, because the racial and economic conditions of Jewish development in their general factors have not been shown to be sufficiently unlike those of other nationalities to account for the remarkable peculiarities of this religion. The truth probably lies in a correlation of the two explanations, for they are not fundamentally inconsistent. Certainly a people's *conception* of God is necessarily determined by its social experience. If God seeks to reveal Himself to men, how else is it possible for Him to do it except in terms of their experience? The fact that religious ideas are always cast in the mould of social experience does not at all render it incredible that God objectively exists and communicates Himself to men. It can be shown that the concept of the human personality and the idea of a material world are also conditioned by social experience. But however one may account for the singular

ethical character of the Hebrew religion, it is a *fact* which is beyond question. From the origin of this nation in the Abrahamic clan down to the time of Jesus, through all the vicissitudes of its experiences, in its conflicts with other groups, and in the development of its social organization, righteousness was the supreme interest of all its chief men.

Strictly speaking, the Jewish race was not more religious than other ancient peoples, and their religion was of the general type which always prevailed among ancient people,—that is, it was a group religion. Their great peculiarity was that they blended ethics and religion as no other contemporary people did. They conceived of God as personal and ethical in the fullest sense of both words. Personality, holiness, righteousness, were His supreme characteristics. And holiness and righteousness were not merely His personal qualities; they were the qualities which He demanded in His worshippers. His goodness was not of the negative type; but was positive and aggressive, and could be satisfied with nothing less than a righteous universe. It was for righteousness and holiness that He primarily cared.

This people also grasped with extraordinary clearness the unity of God. After the most liberal concessions are made to those who insist that there are evidences in Hebrew literature of an original belief in a plurality of divinities, the fact remains that within the period in which that lit-

erature was produced the unity of God was a prime article of faith. If at times there are expressions which seem to imply an admission of the reality of the gods of other groups, the latter are always represented as beings of a lower order than the true God of the Hebrews; and the falsity and nothingness of those alien gods is so often declared as to leave it doubtful whether their reality is intended to be admitted anywhere. At any rate, it is beyond question that the world owes to this people the truly grand conception of one God, personal, spiritual, ethical, the original Cause and the Supreme Ruler of the universe, who is profoundly interested in the ethical character of His worshippers as being the highest good to which men can attain and the condition of all other real blessings. Let one account for this conception of the divine character as he may, regarding it as an evolution out of the social experience of the Jews or as revealed to them by divine inspiration, the sociological consequence remains the same, and constitutes the particular interest of this discussion; and its importance can hardly be overestimated.

The natural process of individualizing the units of the social group, through the expansion of the group, the complication of its organization and the diversification of its social interests was not hindered but furthered by the character of this religion. The high value which it placed upon personality and its extraordinary emphasis

on ethical character stimulated the individualizing process.

There were striking differences between the Greek and Hebrew ideals of the perfect social state. The one was the product of philosophical speculation; the other sprang from the demands of the moral sense. The one exalted intellectual insight, culture; the other, conscience and righteousness. The Greek ideal subjected the common people to the preferred classes, seeing in the latter alone the dignity of humanity, while the former had no reason for existence except to relieve real men of drudgery and thus to afford them an opportunity to cultivate and enjoy the true values of life; the Hebrew ideal sternly forbade the oppression of the weak by the strong as rebellion against Jehovah, in whose eyes the personality and rights of the poor man were precious, and required an equitable distribution of all the values of life as the fulfillment of religious duty. Of course, the one ideal was never fully realized in Greece, nor the other in Israel. But certainly these two pictures of the ideal society, drawn on the one hand by the Hellenic philosophers, and on the other by the Hebrew prophets, are true exponents of the essential tendencies of the two civilizations. The one set of men had at the very center of their universe an impersonal and therefore non-ethical principle; the other, an Almighty Person, who was profoundly ethical. Starting from their major premise, the Greek thinkers

could hardly find their way logically to the consecration of the common man; and it would have been logical hari-kari for the Hebrew prophets to reach any other conclusion. The social ideal of the prophets has never lost its charm, except for those to whom a religious interpretation of the world is in itself offensive; but those who find it objectionable on this account may well ask themselves whether this noble ideal of social righteousness, which grew like a lily on the stem of that religion, can ever be kept alive if severed from its religious root.

But though the Hebrews had in their religion an influence which strongly promoted the process of individualizing the social units, which made the personality of the common man sacred and inviolable, and which, therefore, furnished the ethical basis for the organization of humanity into one brotherhood, they actually failed to accomplish this noble result. As all students of social history know, their religion did offer a most vigorous resistance to social injustice within the Hebrew state. The forces that make for political and economic inequality and oppression found in that religion the most effective barrier which opposed them anywhere in the ancient world. The lot of the poor and the weak was more tolerable among the Jews than elsewhere because the poor and weak were the wards of Jehovah. This proposition can not be disputed; and yet the full social implication of this religion was never de-

veloped within Israel; and the cause of this failure is not far to seek. An outstanding fact of Hebrew development was the extraordinarily strong group-consciousness which characterized the race. And this extreme exclusiveness was closely related to their religious experience. In order to maintain in its essential purity the religion which was by far the most precious asset of their civilization, it was necessary for them to be kept from too free and frequent commerce with other groups. Intermingling with other peoples led time and again to religious apostasy and the corruption of morals. The relaxation of their exclusiveness, under the conditions of life that then prevailed, would certainly have led to the forfeiture of their social mission, which was to develop a religion that had in it the spiritual and ethical principles on the basis of which humanity could ultimately be organized into a universal brotherhood. Of course, contacts with other tribes and nations were inevitable, and some measure of intermingling with them was unavoidable. Further investigations may confirm the hypothesis that the key to the history of the Jewish people was the final amalgamation, after a long period of friction, of the Hebrew tribes, which settled in the hill country and developed a rural civilization, and the Amorites, who retained most of the cities and developed an urban civilization. But granting this, it still is true that the Hebrew race resisted more vigorously

than other ancient peoples the process of intermingling and blending with other groups, and that the motive of that resistance was their sense of the extraordinary value of their religion. A commingling of religious types often results in religious progress; but the time was not ripe for the development of a cosmopolitan religion. A thorough blend of the Hebrew faith with other contemporary faiths would inevitably have obscured the vital principle in it. The contact between it and other religions doubtless modified it, and not always, perhaps, to its disadvantage. But it was extremely important to prevent amalgamation. Hence the necessity, at that time, of keeping the people who had the germinal principles of the universal religion from a too free commingling with other peoples.

This singular paradox runs through all their history and is the secret of the most interesting and most tragical chapters of that history. That the principles which in after times were to constitute the inner, spiritual bonds of a universal human brotherhood should be thoroughly established and embodied in imperishable literature, the people who were the bearers of these treasures must be disciplined in exclusiveness. This was so thoroughly done that they came to be in their relations with other groups the most unbrotherly of all peoples and the one race which has proved to be the most difficult to absorb into the general human stock. They did not perceive with respect

to other races the social implications that were involved in the spiritual and ethical heart of their religion. In moments of high inspiration the scales fell, or seemed to fall, from the eyes of their prophets and the glowing prophetic pictures of the Kingdom of God in its full realization included all the world in one righteous and blessed social order. But the full significance of such visions lay far beyond the thought of the body of the people. The fact that they conceived of their Deity as the one and only true God, infinitely holy and righteous, implied so clearly that He was the God of all the earth that the essential universality of their religion was bound to force itself upon the national consciousness; but this universality had to be harmonized in their thought with the intense national exclusiveness in which the maintenance and development of their religion in its purity had required them to be so thoroughly trained. The result was a conception of a universal kingdom of God within which the Jews enjoyed special privileges as the favoured people of Jehovah. The fatal flaw of racial aristocracy proved to be for this ideal the "fly in the ointment." Thus the social development of the Hebrews ended, like that of the Greeks, in a "blind alley."

Another influence doubtless contributed to this result. With the Jews, as with all peoples, religion needed to be clothed in elaborate ritual and ceremony in order to adapt it to the modes of

thought and feeling characteristic of the earlier stages of development. But one wonders that in the maturity of the race they clung with such tenacity to the mere husk of religious form and that it was so extremely difficult to bring them to appreciate the ethical and spiritual kernel which the husk was not longer needed to protect. Herein lay the tragedy of the race. Of course, it may be said in explanation that there always is a natural tendency for the external and formal to flourish at the expense of the essential and spiritual, in religion as in all other spheres of life; but this fact does not seem sufficient to explain the exceptional religious history of the Hebrews. They had wrapped up in the forms of their religion a priceless spiritual treasure. When the time came to take away the rag of ritual that the treasure itself in all its richness might be enjoyed, the nation, as a nation, clung to the rag and surrendered the treasure to other peoples who had a higher appreciation of its value. Thus the Jews, with the exception of a remnant, disregarded the essential meaning of their religion; and other races threw away their religions that they might take the treasure which the Jews had long borne but now in their folly cast from them. Here is a most remarkable fact. Probably it can be fully accounted for only on the ground that the excessive group-exclusiveness of the Jews emphasized the natural tendency to formalism. The formal element of their religion

harmonized excellently with this exclusiveness; the spiritual element was essentially antagonistic to it. Hence the exceptional energy with which they reacted against the latter and adhered to the former.

A strange history it was! A people was commissioned to be the bearers of the great principles of ethical religion, which, in its very nature, tended to universal brotherhood. That they might not lose this treasure by premature intermingling with other peoples it was necessary that they should maintain and cultivate the ancient group exclusiveness, which among other races was all the while becoming more lax. This exclusiveness strengthened the tendency toward formalism and caused them to reject with vehemence the full disclosure of the social implications of their spiritual principles; while the other peoples, who had been growing somewhat broader in their group consciousness, accepted these discarded principles and took up the age-long task of organizing an ethical brotherhood of mankind.

We turn now to consider the part played by the Romans in the social development of the ancient world. The Greeks elaborated a philosophy of the world which contributed to the intellectual life of man certain universal concepts, but in the attempt to embody these concepts in a science of society, they laboured under limitations which they could not overcome. The Hebrews contrib-

uted certain religious principles which, when stripped of their ceremonial envelope, were capable of development into a religion which could form the spiritual basis for the righteous adjustment of men in a universal organization of mankind; but, as noted above, they were almost wholly unprepared for such a broad application of their principles.

From the first the Romans exhibited a remarkable genius for war, conquest, and political organization. From the city on the Tiber their military power expanded practically to the limits of the world as then known. The neighbouring tribes of the Italian peninsula were soon brought into subjection, and the Roman sway extended with great rapidity and steadiness in all directions until the upper fringe of Africa on the south, the lands that stretched indefinitely toward the east, and the wild regions of Gaul and Britain on the north and west were brought under control with their motley populations. Greece and Judea with their rich intellectual and spiritual treasures were incorporated in the great heterogeneous empire. Among no other ancient people, and hardly among any people of the modern world, did the processes of national expansion and of social organization go on so rapidly. The task of building so many groups, each with its specific type of political and mental organization, into one great imperial structure was one of the most stupendous ever undertaken; in fact, it was probably the

greatest. No modern empire has had difficulties so great to overcome. Group types were then more pronounced than now; group antagonism was more intense. Intercommunication was less frequent and more difficult; the psychic or spiritual forces of cohesion between peoples were weaker, and the forces of repulsion stronger. To bring these varied and repellant types into one organization, to establish and maintain peaceful relations among them, nothing would avail but force. Of common custom there was little; of common intellectual life there was probably less; of common religious life there was practically none. The amalgamating and blending agencies of the inner life which to-day are knitting together so many peoples of the modern world were notably absent. Hence it was necessary then to rely more exclusively upon force as an external bond by which the varied groups could be held together as a political unity. The sword was the principal unifying power. But as these dissimilar and repellant races and nationalities were compacted by force into a unity, the problem of adjustment was rendered very acute, and so the Romans were under the necessity of developing a vast system of laws.

The incorporation of so many national groups in one political structure also resulted in a great complexity of social relations; in the contact with one another of many different types of men; in the diversification of all the interests of life; in

the more frequent stimulation of the powers of thought and will. It reacted, therefore, powerfully upon the character of the social units. By a natural law, it inevitably resulted in the higher average development of individuality in the people. As before noted, the progressive organization of society always has for its corollary the progressive development of individuality in men; and as a result, personality counts for more. This process went on in Roman as rapidly perhaps as in Greek or Hebrew life, notwithstanding the fact that the more militant habits of the Roman people doubtless operated as a very strong check upon it. Unquestionably military life tends to retard the development of individuality for obvious reasons; but at the same time the military success of the Romans resulted in the subjugation and incorporation of many alien groups, and consequently in making the social life more varied and stimulating, and this tended to individualize men more rapidly. One can trace the counteraction of these two tendencies throughout Roman history. The warlike habits of the people retarded the development of individuality, while the vast complication and diversification of the social life resulting from their conquests promoted it.

The net result was that the Romans advanced a good way toward the appreciation of the dignity of the individual personality. But in their civilization there were fatal defects which made it

impossible for the social process to go on to the organization of humanity into a universal brotherhood based upon the recognition of the essential worth of a man as such. They came to have a high appreciation of the dignity of the Roman citizen, but his dignity consisted in his Roman citizenship, not in his simple humanity. With the exception of India, there has not been perhaps among any people a sharper separation of men into two classes—those who had dignity, rights and privileges, and those who had none. The former consisted of Roman citizens; the latter, of all those who had not been by birth or otherwise included in this inner circle of the preferred minority. The great masses of men were of no worth, except as the subjects and servants of those who had a title to the real values of life. The Romans effected an organization of humanity which was well-nigh universal, but it was based upon force; it did not recognize the inherent worth of simple humanity; it was very largely destitute of any inner bond of cohesion; it was not animated by an ethical or spiritual principle which bound men together in a fraternity of souls. It was a corpus of humanity, but had little life within. It did not place the crown upon personality *per se,* nor attribute to every human being the right to all the privileges of personality.

Nevertheless, this Roman organization of life performed a great function in the development

of a fraternal organization of mankind. It brought all the variant and antagonistic groups of the ancient world into one political structure and compelled them to live in peaceful communication with one another. The ancient repulsions were of necessity modified. The Romans were wise enough to respect the national integrity of these conquered peoples so far as it was consistent with the domination of Rome and with the efficiency of the central administration. But the incorporation of them in one empire and the world-wide intercommunication which resulted inevitably broke down, or if it did not break down, broke through the barriers which separted them. The empire was like a great caldron into which the relatively isolated groups of the primeval world were thrown and mixed. Unlike customs were brought face to face with one another; religions of different types stood side by side. Formerly people had regarded the social order in which they lived as the normal order of the universe itself. Now they were compelled to see in the systems with which they were connected only provincial types. They were compelled to question, to doubt, to discriminate. In this way, various social orders were brought together into a synthesis which could hardly fail to disintegrate them. Only those which were the most thoroughly crystallized could offer any effectual resistance to the process of disintegration, and none could

maintain itself absolutely intact. A truly cosmopolitan life grew up. The primitive order of things was gone. There took place a general dissolution of customs and decadence of religions. The ancient systems of religion had all grown up in adaptation to the needs of the ancient order, which was no more. They were no longer suitable; they did not meet the needs of men any longer; religious skepticism prevailed. There was no religion which could serve as a spiritual bond of union, a principle of social cohesion.

Ethical codes were similarly affected. These codes were constituent factors of the organized group-life which was undergoing disintegration; and thus not only religious skepticism, but moral confusion and indifferentism prevailed. At the very time when practically all the social groups of the world then known had been organized into one political structure, the whole organization of the inner life of society was dissolved; and the latter process was the natural result of the former.

There had thus been effected an objective or external organization of the human world, the cohesive principle of which was force. Mankind waited for and vaguely expected the reorganization of the inner life to correspond with the new situation. And those whose hearts and consciences were not put to sleep with the narcotic of skeptical indifference sighed and sought for a

new light which could bring back to men the sense of moral obligation and spiritual reality. At Rome force ruled, while there arose a mighty tide of sensuality and brutality, and Roman emperors whose lives were little above the beastly were elevated after their death to the dignity of gods; at Jerusalem there was frigid formalism after a long silence of the prophetic voice, while the Jew wandered through the world a materialistic trader and despised alien; at Athens, philosophy was in decline and organized into sects, and morality was decadent, while the degenerate posterity of the great age of Plato and Aristotle were dabbling in Oriental occultism and bringing many uncanny and unclean superstitions from the East to the capital of the world.

Scattered throughout this spiritually bankrupt world were many earnest souls who were deeply sensible of the general poverty of the inner life, but whose faith in the spiritual meaning of the world failed not, and whose senses were ever alert to catch the first signs betokening the dawn of a better day—"the day-spring from on high," —for which they hoped. Was it not of these that the great Teacher spoke when He said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit. . . . Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness"? For it was just at this juncture in the social development of mankind that there appeared on the banks of the Jordan a shaggy

prophet, announcing the coming of a new movement; and soon there was heard on the hillsides of Galilee and Judea a voice declaring in tones of sweetness and power that the Kingdom of God had come,—a voice whose tones, without losing any of their sweetness, have grown in power until they fill the whole world and are shaking the hearts of all its people.

PART I

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

CHAPTER I

THE KINGDOM OF GOD, A SOCIAL CONCEPT

We have seen that when Jesus came there existed a great social order, the Roman Empire, organized on the basis of force. It was the creation of a people who were pre-eminently practical, who never seriously concerned themselves with social ideals, being too busily engaged in organizing and administering a system of society under the sway of very commonplace motives to devote much time to either the philosophy or the ethics of the process in which they were engaged. But there were extant three great ideals of the social order.

The Greek ideal had been most thoroughly formulated by Plato, to which reference was made in the foregoing chapter. But the Platonic ideal was no longer regnant in social thought. The most important philosophical ideal of society current in the time of Jesus was that of the Stoics. This school of thinkers represented a noble effort of the human reason to solve the problem of individual and social life in an age of disintegration and confusion. "They set up a social ideal which claimed for all men moral freedom and equality and the possibility of living in a state of communistic freedom from suffering, in the per-

fection of moral disposition without law, force, war, or the state." This recognition of essential equality was based upon the fact that all men shared in the Universal Reason. The realization of this ideal, however, was not to be hoped for. It was thought by the Stoics to belong to the golden primitive age, and to be lost without hope of return. They were social pessimists. To realize their ideal in a social order it would be necessary, they supposed, to undo all the results of history and begin the world over again. Men might, as individuals, or in private circles, attain to this perfection; but society, while its evil tendencies and follies might be individually resisted, was beyond redemption. This system of thought appealed to a limited circle of conscientious philosophically-minded people, but was wholly ineffective beyond that narrow group.

The Hebrew ideal of that time was less definitely formulated than the Platonic or the Stoic. The Kingdom of God was presented in glowing colours and magnificent imagery by the prophets. The words with which they described it throbbed with moral and spiritual passion. But the outlines of this social order in which the righteous reign of Jehovah over the world was to be realized were not clearly drawn. Jerusalem was its center and it included the ends of the earth; it was filled with the glory and peace of Jehovah's presence; in it "the swords had been beaten into plowshares" and "the trees of the field clapped

their hands for joy." The splendid poetry of it thrills the heart, but it cannot be subjected to critical analysis. This very defect is doubtless a virtue and shows its superiority to the ideal of Plato or that of the Stoics. It may be less satisfying to the intellect than they, but its appeal to the emtions makes it a more effective social dynamic. This somewhat nebulous ideal, however, took definite shape in the popular mind as a political world-order with Jerusalem as its capital and the Jews as a preferred and ruling class; and this was the actually current ideal when Jesus came. This Jewish phrase, "The Kingdom of God," was often on the lips of Jesus. He made it the most general concept of His teaching and put into it a new content of meaning. To trace the general outline of that meaning is the object of this chapter.

Let us ask first, Did Jesus think of the Kingdom as a subjective state of the soul or as an objective social order? The answer must be, both. Times and conditions may lead students of His teaching to put the emphasis sometimes on one and sometimes upon the other phase of His great ideal; but exclusive emphasis upon either always obscures the beauty and power of the great conception; and the positive rejection of either amounts to a downright perversion of His teaching and results in a fatal crippling of Christianity.

The primary principle of the Kingdom is the

subordination of the human will to the will of God; though the word "subordination" does not fully express the idea. It is rather a union of the human will with the divine; it is the human will freely accepting the divine will. There is no suggestion of restraint or coercion about the act. It is surrender; but it is surrender not to a superior force, but to a superior, or rather the supreme, moral excellence, which is perceived and appreciated. The act is, therefore, rational and free—the expression of the real personality of the man. In a word, though not in the metaphysical sense of the word, the will of the man and the will of God become one; but this moral identity results from the change of the human will. Ideally, the Kingdom of God as a subjective state means the complete conformity of the inner life to the character of God; the bringing of the thoughts and the intents of the heart, the affections, the purposes, the ideals, the whole voluntary nature—including impulses, aims, and decisions—not into subjection to, but rather into harmony with the divine life.

But the incorporation, so to speak, of the will of God in the wills of individual men means, of course, the conformity of the actions of men to the will of God. If all the interests, purposes and ideals of a man are inspired by the will of God, then all the actions of the man which have any moral significance will be expressions of that will; and all actions which grow out of or affect the

relations of men one to another have moral significance. The Kingdom of God, therefore, becomes external—objectifies itself, so to speak—in all our social relations, and is of necessity embodied in a social order exactly as far and as fast as it is realized internally in individual men. To try to separate the inner lives of men from the social order in which they live is as foolish and disastrous as to try to separate the roots of a tree from its trunk and branches. Such a separation may be effected in the case of a tree, but will certainly result in the death of the trunk and branches, and probably in the death of the roots. To separate the inner lives of individuals from the social order is really impossible. But the very attempt may be extremely hurtful. The concave and convex surfaces of a hollow sphere are no more inséparably related and invariably proportioned to one another than the inner individual and outer social spheres of human life. The inner life and the social order act and react upon one another always and inevitably.

We must conclude, then, that the Kingdom of God is also a social order—a system of human relations, the organic principle of which is the will of God. That it was such in the thought of Jesus there is abundant evidence, besides the fact just noted that a social meaning is necessarily involved in the conception of it as a subjective spiritual state. In the first place, its social significance may be inferred from the use Jesus

made of the phrase that was current in Jewish speech and literature. In the mind of the Jew the Kingdom of God meant a definite social order, and none the less so because he expected it to be established by a catastrophic judgment of God through the agency of a heaven-sent Messiah. Common sense forbids us to assume that, in adopting and using the phrase freely, Jesus emptied it of all social reference. He gave it a new meaning; but it is not probable that He would have adopted it if He had not retained some elements of the meaning which currently attached to it. He was a teacher; and it would not have been good pedagogy to take a phrase which clearly denoted a social concept and use it to express a non-social concept. That would have been to cut the line of communication between His mind and the minds of His hearers and to provoke misunderstanding deliberately. His method was to take current ideas and expand, deepen, spiritualize their meaning and thus lead His hearers to higher truth.

If He had used the phrase to indicate simply and only a state of soul of the individual He would not only have rendered it unnecessarily difficult for His contemporaries to understand Him, but would also have broken the continuity of His teaching with the teaching of the prophets, which we know He did not intend to do. However vague may be the meaning of the glowing word-pictures which Isaiah and others threw upon the

canvas of the future, one cannot read them without the impression that they were the indefinite portrayals of a glorious state of society; and the highly mystical language of Ezekiel and Daniel cannot possibly be given any other significance. Jesus came declaring that He was carrying to fulfillment the teaching of the prophets; which He could not have been doing if by this great phrase, "The Kingdom of God," He had meant only an inward condition of the individual soul and not a social order at all.

Furthermore, He implied that it meant a social order, an organized system of human relations, when He spoke of entrance into the Kingdom. True, one may speak metaphorically of an entrance into a purely subjective state; but that is only to use a metaphor, and it can hardly be maintained that Jesus was using this metaphor when He said to His disciples: "Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments and shall teach men so shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven. For I say unto you, except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." Again, when He teaches His disciples to pray, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven," has He in mind nothing more than a subjective state of the individual?

Much of His teaching is wholly inconsistent with this narrower interpretation of the phrase. For instance, how can the parable of the tares and His explanation of it, and the parable of the net be construed without putting into them a broad social meaning? It may be plausible to contend that these parables are intended to illustrate certain social processes which take place in this world and culminate in a blessed social order in the next. Indeed, it cannot be denied that Jesus contemplated as the final issue of the processes of the Kingdom in this temporal sphere an eternal, heavenly state of blessedness; but it is equally evident that that heavenly life is social, and that true righteousness consists in transforming this earthly order into its likeness.

Further argument need not now be pursued. There may be some to-day who fear that emphasis upon the social implications of the Kingdom is about to divert attention from its subjective meaning,—a danger which needs to be guarded against; but there are few now who will undertake to maintain that the Kingdom does not signify a social order in some real sense of the term, except certain critics of the ethics of Jesus, who contend that there is in His teaching no conception of and no doctrine concerning society as an organic whole, and who see in this alleged defect the evidence that His ideal is no longer suited to the needs of the world and can not be accepted as a guide in the solution of the social problems

of this age. Later on these criticisms will be discussed more in detail; at present more need not be said in support of the proposition that the scheme of Jesus was not an exclusively individualistic one, but included a thorough reorganization of the social system.

Evidently the Kingdom in His thought is a growth, a development, the unfolding of a principle of life, in its subjective as well as in its objective phases. There is, indeed, no aspect of the thinking of Jesus more characteristic than this. Again and again does He emphasize the principle of development. It is somewhat surprising, in fact, to see how large a place in His thinking this great principle has, which is so regnant and so fruitful in modern thought. To feel this, one has but to recall the parables of the mustard seed and of the leaven, which illustrate by natural processes both the subjective and objective phases of the Kingdom's development. The process of organizing a character or a society in conformity to the will of God takes place by a general law that prevails throughout the realm of nature, which is also a manifestation of the divine thought. Character must grow as a tree grows; social influences must spread as the fermentation of the leaven spreads.

There are, however, certain expressions of his which indicate that He contemplated a sudden apocalyptic realization of the Kingdom.[1] There

[1] Matthew, 24th chapter, and corresponding passages in Mark and Luke.

has been much disagreement as to what these utterances mean, and a variety of interpretations have been proposed and supported by elaborate arguments. Each interpretation is beset with difficulty. Some have imagined that these passages represent later additions or interpolations, and that Jesus did not speak these words or any like them; but no criticism can eliminate them from the record. The discourse concerning the Parousia is found in Mark and in the hypothetical document assumed by critics to have been perhaps the earliest record of the teaching of Jesus and to have been embodied in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. If the hypothesis of this school of critics be true, this document probably constituted the most nearly contemporary and, presumably, the most authentic account of what Jesus said. So that, from the standpoint of Biblical criticism, conservative or radical, this discourse must be accepted. Some have thought that in using these expressions He was merely accommodating Himself to the modes of thought of His time; while others have contended that He was a genuine child of His age, and Himself conceived of the future after the manner of the apocalyptics of that day. Still others have assumed that these reports of His words are highly colored by the current Messianic notions of His day, which Jesus Himself did not share; and therefore regard them as inaccurate and exaggerated accounts of what He said. This is an *a priori* assumption based

upon the fact that it seems incredible to these critics that a mind so characteristically sane and balanced as that of Jesus should conceive of the coming of the Kingdom in these terms.

It would be bold to undertake to solve the problem. The following suggestions are offered in the hope that they may at least help in harmonizing those passages in which He seems to expect a sudden and catastrophic coming of the Kingdom with those in which He certainly teaches the realization of the Kingdom by a process of gradual development. Does not social evolution in general actually proceed in both ways? In every great social movement there is a period, which is usually proportionate in length to the depth and extent of the movement, during which social forces are at work silently and unobtrusively. The processes going on escape observation, to a large extent, during decades or even centuries and ages. Subtle changes are taking place in the fundamental conditions of social life, but so gradually that the attention of men is not focused upon them. Mental attitudes and points of view are altered. Old ideas slowly fade out in the hearts of the people, and new ones as slowly grow up. While these mental changes are in process the traditional organization of society in its main outline persists. Institutions formed and crystallized in one period have a way of outliving the conditions in which they took shape; they have a sort of inertia and for a long time

offer effective resistance to the accumulating pressure of the forces that are opposed to them. But the increasing pressure makes itself felt more and more sensibly; the movement which at first was hardly noticeable, which progressed so slowly because it was so weak and the obstruction so strong, gathers momentum. The ratio of power as between the static and dynamic forces constantly changes. The dynamic forces grow in volume and in might as the obstructing institutions are undermined and weakened. Sooner or later effective resistance is no longer possible; it begins to give way, and then the old institutions tumble in a confused mass of ruins, and chaos seems to reign. It is like the giving way of a dam before an accumulating mass of water. Thus social progress takes place by a process of gradual, subtle, accumulative change which is punctuated at intervals by catastrophic upheavals in which old and defunct social systems are overthrown. A cursory reading of history makes this evident. Was this not exemplified in the destruction of Jerusalem, in the downfall of the Roman Empire, in the French Revolution, the Puritan Revolution in England, the American Revolution of 1776, and the yet greater one of 1861? Indeed, the examples of this method of social progress almost make up the history of the world.

Now, may not this general law of social development be the principle which harmonizes these apparently contradictory teachings of Jesus

concerning the progress of the Kingdom? As He forecasted the evolution of the great enterprise He was organizing, may He not have seen and thus interpreted a series of gradual movements, each reaching its culmination in a sort of cataclysm and together constituting the successive stages of a vast world-transforming process which would come to its final climax in a universal regeneration of human society? Since He Himself declared that His knowledge of the future had its limitations, it is not necessary, or indeed permissible, for us to suppose that this historical development lay like a detailed chart of the future in His mind. The great series of events in which the movement He initiated was to be worked out might well have seemed foreshortened in the perspective in which He viewed it, and the final issue have appeared to be much closer at hand than it has proved to be in the unfolding of time; but this would in no way affect the essential truth of His representation.

This will appear to many an unsatisfactory solution of this difficulty; but it does not seem an impossible one, and it would indicate that the thought of Jesus, even though conceived in the forms of the highly-wrought Oriental imagery of the apocalyptics, ran parallel with the natural processes of the world. At any rate, it makes intelligible and consistent the apparently contradictory ideas of the coming of the Kingdom attributed to Jesus.

As the process of social evolution above outlined is examined, it becomes obvious that it has two distinct phases. On the one hand, there is the gradual expansion of the reconstructing and transforming forces; on the other, the relatively sudden and catastrophic overthrow of the institutions that resist this expansion. A highly religious spirit contemplating this historical process would, as a matter of course, interpret it as a divine-human drama; would see, especially in every great crisis, the emergence into visible action of the great spiritual powers that constitute the ultimate causes of all phenomena; and, in the sudden, chaotic and terrible collapse of ancient institutions, their destruction by divine judgment. If the modern scientific habit of mind no longer perceives the activity of divine powers in historical processes, that by no means indicates that there is no such activity. It is a naïve and gratuitous assumption of the modern mind that its mode of conceiving the world is final and adequate; but there is no real reason to suppose that it may not be a temporary and passing one, destined in time to go to join in the world of shadows the large and growing assortment of partial and discredited world-views which had each "its day and ceased to be."

However, the ideas of Jesus as to the time and manner of establishing the Kingdom are matters of only secondary interest in this discussion. What we are primarily interested in

is the fact that the setting up of the Kingdom, however and whenever it occurred, was to take place here on earth and involved a transformation of the entire social order.

If our position is correct, it is apparent that Jesus was very much more than a social reformer. His program was far more radical and comprehensive than that of a reformer. We usually understand by a social reform some needed readjustment within a given social system; but Jesus expected to see the entire social order regenerated by a gradual process, punctuated at intervals by catastrophic changes. He projected into the world a great dynamic organizing social principle, or energy, which was to spread and to penetrate through and through the social organism, transforming it from within; so that ultimately all its activities would be performed in a new spirit, and all its forms changed and adapted to express the character of the new life which should animate it. Was the political order included in the scope of this plan? Yes, but He did not stop to tinker with political systems; He did not consume His precious days in the endeavour to substitute one political constitution for another; He was neither a political philosopher nor the founder of a new state. Did His undertaking include the economic system? Yes, but He was not an economist nor a socialist. The economic and political structures were to be radically changed. He planted within the secular

society a living and expansive principle which must penetrate and dominate and express itself through it, and in doing so must fundamentally transform it; for social forms must be the expression of the social spirit, though when once crystallized they can be reshaped only with difficulty. But He instituted no specific political or economic reforms.

And yet it would be a gross error for us to conclude that His followers should neglect these matters. It is ours to make bit-by-bit applications of His principles, as the circumstances permit. Only thus can we live in His spirit and carry forward to fulfillment His comprehensive program. Because He put forth no concrete efforts at political and economic reforms, His timid followers who seek to avoid the inconveniences and frictions incident to such efforts, try to hide their selfish love of ease and popularity behind His example; but falsely. Because He limited Himself to laying the deep foundations, which He cemented with His blood, shall we decline to build the superstructure, stone by stone, because the toil is arduous? But petty reforms which aim at nothing more than patching up an evil social system are far from being a fulfillment of His program.

Likewise, Jesus was much more than a mere builder of an ecclesiastical system. The Kingdom is more than a church. However, the Kingdom must inevitably create a church. The new

brotherhood of believers was constituted in the midst of an alien and hostile environment whose forms were moulded by an organic principle quite contrary to that which drew the Christians into fellowship with one another. The new social spirit which animated this new association of men could not therefore express itself through those alien forms. It must constitute for itself a new organization through which it could put forth its energy, by means of which it could maintain and propagate itself, while it was engaged in the age-long task of subduing and transforming the entire social organism. The new social group, whose aim was to substitute for the old social structure a new one, needed a fulcrum for the accomplishment of so stupendous a task. The church was the instrumentality created for this purpose. To suppose that the whole movement aimed at nothing more than the construction of an ecclesiastical organization to take the place of the ancient religious organs of society, while leaving the old structure of political and economic society intact, is to fail to grasp its central meaning; and certainly such a conception of the mission of Christianity must end in an ecclesiasticism emptied of all spiritual vitality, and conformed both in spirit and in organization to the system of secular society, which it leaves undisturbed. Nor does it help the case, but rather makes it worse, for the church as an organization to claim and acquire the power to control the political and economic

functions. This, while it subjects the secular order to the ecclesiastical, inevitably results in the internal assimilation of the latter to the former. How sad that the history of Christianity should consist so largely of the story of this perversion! Both Romanism and Protestantism are guilty, though the latter in a less degree.

The church is only an instrument for the realization of the Kingdom. The recreative spiritual and ethical energy projected into the world by Jesus originated it as an agency for the accomplishment of this task. The church is related to the Kingdom solely as a means to an end. While the old non-Christian and largely anti-Christian social order is undergoing disintegration and a new order is being fashioned as the expression of the Christian ideal, the ethical and spiritual forces which are engaged in this vast enterprise of destruction and reconstruction need the church as a basis of operation, a power-plant, a point of concentration and centre of radiation. The church, then, is far from being the final objective in the movement of Jesus. His aim went far beyond the establishment of an ecclesiastical organization in the midst of an alien social order; and He never contemplated at all the conversion of the general social order into an ecclesiastical organization, nor an external subjection of the former to the latter. The social order which confronted Him and His disciples was not adapted to the expression of His spirit; it was the expres-

sion of a social spirit which was not only different from, but almost wholly opposed to, His. And it needed to be reconstituted within and without. Because this was required and while it was in process, the church was a necessity and will continue to be until this process is completed.

Perhaps from this point of view we can get a new conception of a tendency in the religious life of our time which has caused apprehension in many earnest souls, and perplexes when it does not alarm. Our attention is frequently directed to the fact that in this age, when the spirit of Jesus seems to be dynamically present in human society in an exceptional degree, when His ideal of human relations seems to have an authority over the hearts of men such as it never had before, the church seems to be losing prestige and apparently occupies a smaller place in the affections even of His followers. But is there not at least a partial explanation of this tendency which should be neither alarming nor disconcerting to those who have grasped, however inadequately, the full program of Jesus? We owe too much to the church of Christ ever to find pleasure in the fact *per se* that it is losing in power for any cause; and, if the present situation indicated any decline in the spiritual energy which created the church and uses it as an instrumentality, it surely would afford ample grounds for the indulgence of a pessimistic mood. But how far is this the case? If the church is

simply an instrumentality whose purpose is and always should be the enthronement of the spirit and ideals of Jesus in the whole social order, we ought to be neither alarmed nor surprised that in proportion as this purpose is accomplished the sense of the need of the church should relatively decline. Normally the sense of the value of the instrument will relatively decline as the end for the accomplishment of which it exists approximates its fulfillment. And surely it does not require an extravagant optimism to believe that the whole social order is to-day being influenced and refashioned by the dynamic power of Christianity as never before. It certainly seems to many observers that the fulfillment of the Kingdom is approaching with extraordinary rapidity; and if there should occur a relative decline in the sense of the value and importance of the ecclesiastical instrument, would it not be an unfortunate misplacing of emphasis to interpret such a relative decline as a collapse of the program of Jesus? Not long since an earnest and successful pastor remarked, in a tone of mingled joy and sadness, that "the Kingdom seems to be coming, but the church does not." If the facts are as he stated, his sadness was not unnatural, but was it wholly justified? We cannot in religion guard too carefully against the tendency ever present in human nature to feel that the instrument is an end in itself, to exalt the institution above its function, to substitute the means for the end in our affec-

tion. Perhaps Christianity has suffered more from this inversion of values than from any other cause whatsoever. Certainly the church is not now in the death-throes and can never disappear so long as the Kingdom of God is not a fully realized fact. But the wise friends of the church would not mourn if it should suffer a relative decline in importance due to the fact that the Kingdom was more and more mastering, and expressing itself through, all the other institutions of society. We cannot forecast a period of time when the instrumentality of the church will not be needed; and, though it may decline in relative importance, it will not disappear so long as it has a vital function to perform.

It would, however, be a capital mistake to suppose that the present situation which brings sadness to many hearts is wholly explained by the foregoing consideration. That consideration certainly needs to be borne in mind, but it by no means entirely removes all ground for anxiety. The decline in the power of the church is especially notable in the great centers of population, where the unrighteousness of the present social order is most acutely felt; and it is due in part to the fact that the church seems to be but dimly conscious of its social mission. The church has an opportunity for which there has been no parallel in the past to be influential in bringing all the economic and political activities of society under the sway of the motives of the Kingdom,

but it responds to that opportunity often by positively declining the undertaking as lying wholly beyond its mission; and when it acknowledges the task as properly belonging to it, its efforts are sluggish, feeble, hesitating, timid, blundering. It does not have a clear understanding of its proper work in the present crisis. It gropes and fumbles and stumbles as if it were afflicted with a partial paralysis which affects at once its nerve centres of sight and hearing and locomotion. Never did it more sorely need a clear understanding of the nature of the Kingdom and of its function as an instrument for realizing this ideal of Jesus. Much of its activity is only remotely or incidentally related, if related at all, to its supreme task. Many a great church resembles a steam engine which stands idly upon the rails or thunders up and down the track but draws no train of cars and is headed for no destination. In innumerable cases the trouble seems to be that the church has unconsciously become an end unto itself and has lost, in part if not wholly, the sense of its purely instrumental relation to the large program of Jesus. The inevitable result is a feebleness and incompetency which invites the neglect and sometimes the contempt of men, who thereupon seek other social agencies by which their ethical enthusiasm may be organized and directed in the struggle for a righteous adjustment of men to one another.

If misery loves company, however, the church

may be comforted to find itself in a goodly company of institutions which are undergoing the same ordeal of criticism. All the great organs of society find themselves assailed to-day and thrown upon the defensive. Monarchy, legislatures, courts of high and low degree, schools, economic institutions of every sort, even the family, are undergoing a searching examination prompted by a profound discontent. Everywhere voices are raised—some of them violently hostile in tone—declaring that in and through these social organizations men are no longer rightly adjusted. Some of these institutions are fighting for their lives; others are making more or less successful efforts to readapt themselves so as to do their work more satisfactorily in the changed conditions; and it is not the church alone which, in some cases, exhibits a blind reactionary spirit and, in other cases, gropes confusedly in the midst of a thicket of uncertainties. There may be a consolation for the church in this reflection, since it clearly indicates that it is not a sinner above other institutions. Readaptation is demanded throughout the whole sphere of organized life; and the church should be not only consoled but inspired by the consideration that such a situation is really a result of the fermentation of the ideals of the Kingdom in the hearts of the people.

What then, we ask in conclusion, is the true definition of the Kingdom of God? It is a bold thing to try to compress the meaning of this great

phrase into a narrow and rigid formula. Jesus never attempted a succinct and logical statement of its meaning, and in not doing so doubtless gave evidence of His exceptional wisdom. The interpretation of it has varied through the ages according to variations in individual and collective experience. Perhaps the experience of all the ages will be needed in order to make definite to our limited understanding the full content of its significance. Its meaning seems to become vaster, deeper with the lapse of time and the accumulation of the social experience of mankind. It has hung in the heaven of human thought as a great, somewhat nebulous but luminous, fascinating, alluring ideal, hovering above the border-line which separates the present world-order from that which lies beyond; inspiring and attracting earnest souls, drawing them on to the ceaseless struggle for righteousness and sustaining them in the arduous conflict. To pack the meaning of this great phrase into a single sentence is like trying to focus all the light that floods the spaces of the sky upon one tiny spot. But, nevertheless, it is our duty to make its meaning as definite to our minds as we can. And certainly whatever else may be included in that meaning, it must signify a *social order, a system of human relations, progressively realized, in which the will of God is the formative principle and all the functions of which are organized and operated for the purpose of helping all men to realize the spiritual possi-*

bilities of humanity. Slowly, as measured by the impatience of earnest souls, the world moves toward that far-off goal, as our sun with its retinue of planets is drawn by the persistent force of gravitation toward a point in the distant constellation of the Pleiades. But the important fact is that the movement goes on, and the supreme duty of every man is to help it forward; and at the present hour there is no more effective help to be given than to hasten the subjugation of all the political and economic activities of society to the law of service, which is the will of God.

CHAPTER II

THE KINGDOM AND THE WORLD

The term "world" bears several important meanings, apart from its use to denote the temporal order as distinguished from the eternal. First, it means the mass of men—humanity conceived as an aggregation of individuals. In this sense the world is the object of God's love, as in the famous passage, "God so loved the world," etc. In another use it means a social order—men in their relations with one another, as dominated by certain ideals, customs, modes of life. It is a more or less clearly defined social concept. For instance, when Jesus speaks of His disciples as those whom the Father had given Him "out of the world;" or when He says of them, "They are not of the world as I am not of the world," it is clear that He is using the word with something of a distinct social connotation. The same meaning is perhaps even more distinct when, addressing His disciples, He says, "If the world hate you, ye know it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world the world would love its own, but because ye are not of the world but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." The same use of the word occurs in John's Epistles. It signifies the tem-

poral order as distinguished from the eternal, but the temporal order is thought of as social in character in a very definite way. The word is used again with a quite indefinite or ambiguous meaning. For example, "the field is the world." Here it evidently might well be taken in either of the senses just noted. It is with the second meaning that the word, world, will be used in this chapter.

It is an interesting fact that among those who report the words and works of Jesus it seems to be John who, more than others, uses this word with this signification. How can this be accounted for? It is foreign to the purpose of this book to enter into the critical questions as to the dates and authorship of the books of the Bible. But it seems to be a well established fact that the Gospel of John was written at a later date than the Synoptics. When this Gospel was written the infant church had accumulated a considerable experience. In the propagation of the new religion they had had numerous conflicts with the organized social forces of that time, and had suffered much. Out of this experience there had grown up an increasingly clear consciousness of those organized forces as constituting an evil social order. Although such a consciousness did not originate in that experience, it was greatly emphasized and made more vivid and definite thereby. The author of the Fourth Gospel, writing after this consciousness of the world as an evil social order had been clarified by experience, would

naturally recall such a use of the term by Jesus; or, on the hypothesis that this Gospel is not a verbatim report of the teaching of Jesus, but rather an interpretation of it with the particular purpose of establishing His divinity, it seems certain that the term is used here to express an idea that was present in that teaching. At any rate, such a use of the word did grow more frequent and definite in the later New Testament literature; and it seems eminently probable that its increasingly definite use in this sense grew out of the experience of the Christians.

At first one would expect that this growing consciousness of the world as an evil social order would lead the Christians to emphasize the meaning of the Kingdom as a redeemed social order standing in contrast over against the world. But in John's Gospel this aspect of the Kingdom seems, contrary to expectations, to receive less emphasis than in the Synoptics; and some students have even maintained that the Kingdom-idea is entirely absent from John's thought. This is an error, as we shall see; but it is a fact that he does not clearly develop in this Gospel what we may call the objective social implications of the Kingdom. Why is this? When we think more deeply on the question, the reason appears. The objective social structure—the political and economic organs of society—were under the domination of a spirit quite opposed to the spirit of the new Christian movement. The customs and ideals

of the world, so opposed to the life-principles of the Kingdom, were acting through those institutions and using them as instruments to annihilate the little group that had been gathered around Jesus. Jesus Himself, from whom they drew their inspiration, had passed into the Unseen and was with them in their struggle only as an invisible presence. They stood off thus in sharp and irreconcilable opposition not only to the world-spirit, but also to the entire social order, all the functions of which were in the service of that hostile spirit. Their strength lay wholly in their spiritual communion with the invisible Lord and their fellowship with one another through Him. Is it any wonder that John, who, of all the New Testament writers, with the possible exception of Paul, was best fitted by nature to appreciate the inner or subjective side of Christian experience and was writing in the midst of the conditions just described, should dwell chiefly upon the spiritual union of Christians with the Lord and with one another? His emphasis on the Kingdom as a subjective state and as a purely spiritual organization was not only natural; it was of the greatest practical utility for the progress of the Kingdom at that particular juncture. Only thus could the struggling band of disciples be strengthened and heartened for their great struggle to wrest from the world-spirit the control of the social instruments through which the collective life must express itself—the political

and economic organization of society. It was not only indispensable then to emphasize the subjective and purely spiritual aspects of the Kingdom; it always will be, for the Kingdom of God in its full realization will be, certainly in one of its most important aspects, the working through a transformed social order of the redeemed spiritual life of men.

It is a mistake, however, to claim that John was wholly without perception or appreciation of the social implications of the Kingdom. If he was conscious of the world as an evil social order, he also looked to the time when that order was to be overthrown. In one of the notable passages of his Gospel, he reports Jesus thus: "When he [the Spirit of Truth] is come, he will reprove the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment; of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to the Father and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the Prince of this world is judged." Again he reports Jesus as exclaiming while under the very shadow of the cross, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." It is only necessary to get the right angle of vision to see in these words a forecast of the disappearance of the unrighteous social order of the world, and the establishment of the Kingdom in its stead. Or, turn to his Epistles and you find these words: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not

in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away and the lust thereof. But he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." Is it not clear that in this passage the "world" means not this terrestrial ball with its mass of material things, but a system of life which is shot through and through with sensuality and pride—an excellent description, in fact, of the social life of the age in which John wrote? And is it not clear that he foresees its end? There is, to be sure, no clear indication as to when or where or how this overthrow of the social order in which sensuality and pride reign is to take place; but its passing away is clearly foretold.

However, as already stated, it was the subjective, inward aspect of the Kingdom as a spiritual union of Christians with one another and with God, which is explicit in this Gospel, while its objective social aspect is rather intimated than expressed.

We should be stepping beyond the limitations set for this discussion to enter into a consideration of the social implications of Paul's doctrine; but it has been so frequently asserted of late that Paul diverted the Christian movement from the social aims of Jesus, that some words as to that question may not be out of place in this connection. In Paul's writing is observable the same increasing consciousness of the world as a definite

social order which has just been noted in the Fourth Gospel, and the same alleged failure to develop the social meaning of the Kingdom. On the contrary, so it is said, he devoted himself to the organization of churches and the elaboration of theological doctrine, and so converted Christianity from a social propaganda into a dogmatic ecclesiasticism. This is to make a whole error of a fragmentary truth. True, Paul devoted his energies to evangelization, to the organization of the Christian communities into churches and the intellectual correlation of Christianity with the previous religious experience of mankind. But in view of the situation then existing, these were exactly the first and necessary steps to take in the propagation of the Kingdom as a movement which was ultimately to transform society. Only thus could it be made a practical and effective factor in the organized life of mankind. Could the widely separated groups of early Christians, who were extremely few in numbers and weak in influence, without definite organization and without any clear comprehension of the intellectual content of their religion, have made any headway against the vast intellectual and social system of Græco-Roman life which it was their mission to penetrate and transform with the principles of the gospel? Those who think so should tell us how it could have been done. The Kingdom as a detached, floating ideal could hardly have accomplished its task for the world. The world was

a very compact organization of material and mental forces on a moral basis of self-seeking, and over against it the forces of the Kingdom needed definite organization. That to Paul chiefly this task of developing the organization was committed was no reflection upon the adequacy with which the more fundamental task of Jesus was performed, under whose immediate supervision that organization had assumed only germinal form. The only question is whether within that organization he embodied the principles of Jesus. To pursue that question would lead too far afield from the purpose of this book; but attention should be called to the fact that Paul, in the famous passage in which he draws the analogy between the relations of the organs of the human body and the constitution of the Christian community, has given the most striking and perfect picture of a social organization according to the principles of Jesus which can be found in all literature. No one has presented any convincing evidence that there is in his doctrine any essential divergence from the principles of Jesus. Troeltsch is right when he affirms that in the teaching of Paul "the essential marks of the ethic of the Gospel remained, but as the ethic of an organized religious community received a new shading." If Paul performed his allotted task of organizing the intellectual and social life of the Christian communities in line with the fundamental ideas of Jesus, it is futile to main-

tain that he diverted the movement from the central purpose of Jesus. Those fundamental ideas needed first to be embodied in the organization of the Christian communities themselves before they could begin to embody themselves in a transformed social order of mankind. The question is not when or how Paul expected the Kingdom to be established, but what sort of social order would its principles, as he enunciated them, inevitably create when embodied in the lives of the people. The alleged diversion did take place. It was not, however, accomplished by Paul, but by those who came after him.

Before proceeding to discuss the relations of the Kingdom to the world in detail, it would be well for us to go into a somewhat more careful analysis of the nature of social relations in general. Such an analysis will disclose the fact that all social relations are in ultimate reality psychical. For illustration, let us examine a particular social structure which is as far as possible removed from the "spiritual" type—say, a business corporation, a railroad company. Manifestly this corporation does not consist of the iron tracks, rolling stock, and accessory buildings. It is a definite group of persons in certain relations with one another. And these relations in their ultimate reality are not physical. The corporation is not an aggregation of human bodies; though it controls in fact the activities of a number of bodies. In its essential reality it is a sys-

tem of psychical relations. It is a number of minds, wills, hearts in definite and relatively permanent attitudes toward one another, reacting upon one another in definite and regular ways, together constituting a complex unity, and through the physical energies which they control and correlate, transporting men and things from place to place. Structurally it is a system of psychical relations. If we think of it functionally, two things are apparent. First, it is physically conditioned in its activity. That is, the interaction between the several units composing the system as well as the action of the system as a whole must take place through certain physical media, human bodies and the natural forces they control. Second, and more important, each mind is dominated or impelled in its interaction with the other minds constituting the sytem by certain feelings or motives; and the whole system in its relations with society at large is dominated and impelled by certain desires and purposes, and judges the activity of each of its members by his loyalty and efficiency in working to these ends. In its structure, then, it is essentially a psychical system; in its activity it is controlled by an ethical ideal which determines its standards and modes of action.

What is true in this respect of this corporate unit is true of every other, and is true of human society as a whole. The social order in its most significant aspect is a vastly complex system of

psychical relations—human minds, wills, hearts in more or less permanent relations with and reaction upon one another and guided in that interaction by ethical principles. Doubtless there has never been a time when a given society was animated by one and the same ethical ideal throughout; but the state of ethical unity, that is, the pervasion of the whole society by a single dominating ethical principle, has been at times very closely approximated; so that all the important social functions, religious, political, economic, were under the control of that one principle. Such was the state of things in the first century of the Christian era. All the great functions of society were under the control of the ethical principle of self-seeking; and the general organization of life on this principle constituted the "world," according to John's use of the term. As was said in a previous chapter, a fearful disintegration of the ethical and religious ideals and standards which had formerly guided conduct took place in the organization of the Roman Empire upon the ruins of the ancient group organization of life. The world-spirit was never perhaps so frankly dominant; the sheer self-seeking impulses of human nature never so thoroughly emancipated from the religious and ethical controls of conduct. This does not imply that there were none who recognized moral restraints. There were numbers of good people, spiritually-minded people, but they were unorganized—scattered "sheep without a

shepherd;" and were able only to suffer and to long for sure guidance and a better day.

Now, how are the Kingdom and the world related to one another in detail? The Kingdom was founded and grew up in the world. The human material, so to speak, which the Kingdom absorbs and assimilates is taken from the world. That is, men when they enter the Kingdom must give up the principles, ideals, modes of life of the world and adopt those of Jesus instead. The inner lives of men which have been cast in the mould of the world must be made over and recast in the mould of Christ's character. This is the work of individual regeneration, and is fundamental. It is evident, then, that the organization of the Kingdom must be primarily a work upon the souls of men, bringing them into new relations with God and one another. This work is a recasting or a reconstituting of their relations Godward and man-ward. As before said, these souls have been constituent elements of the social order of the world. The Kingdom therefore as an organism feeds upon the organism of the world, absorbing its individual personal elements and reorganizing them into a new system of life. It is easy to see, therefore, that evangelization was, has been and is the primary process in the growth of the Kingdom.

There is, it is apparent, no spatial separation of these two systems of life. His disciples were not, nor was it intended by Jesus that they should

be, isolated from the world. On the contrary, He says in speaking to the Father, "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world." The practice of withdrawing from the world was a perversion of Christianity which arose at a later period, as a result of the combination of certain non-Christian ideas with the doctrine of Jesus; as was also the notion that Christians were to live passively in the world-order without either sharing in its spirit or seeking to transform it. They were not to partake of its spirit; but the members of the two were to be continually in contact with one another. This is true of the free, unorganized, personal contacts. Christians are expected to meet and mingle with other people in the informal relations of life. But what is of equal and perhaps greater importance, they must fit themselves into the structural relations of society with the members of the world-order. They must participate with others in carrying on the ordinary social activities, domestic, political, and economic. Otherwise they would have to segregate themselves and organize these functions for themselves *de novo,* which was only to a limited extent practicable. Let us consider separately these two modes of contact.

First, the free, informal, personal contacts. In mingling with people in the free, unorganized relations of life, personal influences of a most potent and important kind are operative. One cannot calculate with any precision to what ex-

tent his habits of thinking, ways of looking at things, estimates of men, modes of feeling, are determined in such contacts: but all experience teaches us that it is very great. Children in playing with one another, adults in their chance meetings and accidental contacts, in their informal friendly, or unfriendly, conversations, etc., are profoundly influenced in their inner lives. These incalculable reactions of mind upon mind are among the most indefinable but powerful formative agencies in the shaping of character. They are so very powerful because in such experiences we are usually "off-guard." Suggestions come flowing in on the stream of conversation and imbed themselves in the very tissues of mental life when the attention is not focused upon them and the will is not in a defensive attitude; and then they colour one's thinking and modify one's actions without any clear consciousness of the sources from which such modifications were derived. Even the scenes casually looked upon, the human actions and situations observed, the pictures flashed upon the eye, all leave their impress upon the mind and heart. When we reflect upon the significance of such interchanges of mental and moral influences in the informal association of persons and accidental contacts with various phases of social environment, we at once realize what a problem grows out of them in the relations of the Kingdom with the world. The members of the Kingdom must be profoundly affected

in these ways; and likewise the people of the world.

Focus attention, in the second place, upon the contacts with the world in the organized relations of social life. The economic and political activities of men, as before pointed out, were at the origin of Christianity organized on the principle of self-seeking; as they are yet to a very large extent. Nevertheless, Christians had perforce to take part in some way in these organized activities. To be sure, the political organization of society at that time was such that the masses of the people had little to do with the actual operation of the organ of government; and yet they were subjects and functionally related to the system; and the Christians were no exception. But the principles and ideals of the Christians were essentially and irreconcilably opposed to those which were actually dominant in political life. Instinctively the government perceived this, and as soon as the band of Christians grew so large as to constitute a social group of importance it drew upon itself the hostility of the political power. In vain did they plead that they were loyal subjects, and that they cherished no revolutionary purposes. That was true—and not true. The foul charges brought against them were absolutely false; but at the same time the world as it was politically organized dimly perceived the fact that there was at work among the Christians a conception of man and of human relations which was

hostile to the principles embodied in the existing political order.

The same conception of man and human relations which was embodied in the political order was also incarnated in the economic organization and methods. Economic functions were not so highly developed then as now; but they were then in a much more thoroughgoing way than now organized and operated on the basis of self-seeking, although they have even yet been less modified in spirit and method by the Christian ethic than any other department of social activity. The institution of the "community of goods" among the Christians, as recorded in the Acts, certainly did not indicate any definite economic theory, and, it is equally certain, did not manifest a clear consciousness of the inconsistency of the ethical principles of Christianity with the prevalent economic methods; but it is nevertheless an illuminating incident. It was a manifestation under peculiar and temporary conditions of the Christian consciousness that material goods were, like all other possessions, subject to the law of love and service. It was the expression of a conception of property which was in fact radically different from that of the world. It is impossible to say how far the early Christians realized the economic implications of the principles of the new life. Very vaguely, in all probability. As we shall see later, the great Master had directed their attention to this question in some of His most emphatic ut-

terances; it seems, however, that the economic applications of His doctrine did not occupy a large place in their thinking. Nor has it done so, except spasmodically and incoherently, down to the present epoch.

But whether they have been fully conscious of it or not, the fact that Christians have all the time been engaged in economic activities which are not organized on the basis of Christian ethics has given rise to some of the most serious problems in the relations of the Kingdom and the world. It has involved many difficulties in Christian living; led to not a few anomalies and inconsistencies; weakened Christian testimony and reacted unhealthfully on Christian character; though, on the other hand, it has profoundly modified these activities and broken in part the dominion of the world over them. There has been going on within these spheres of activity a contest between the ideals of the Kingdom and the ideals of the world—a contest somewhat blind and unconscious—for the control of those great organs through which the collective life expresses itself. As yet they have not been wrested from the control of the world, except in part; but the level of politics and business has been considerably elevated. Indeed, throughout the entire range of institutional life these two antagonistic principles have been struggling for the mastery, with results which are good but yet not decisive.

In considering the relation between the King-

dom and the world there are two principles, operative on both the biological and sociological levels of life, that should be made clear in our thought.

First, an organic being of any kind will either gradually conform itself to the environment with which it is in contact or conform the environment to itself, or will partly do both. An organism cannot live in an environment and not be conformed to it, unless it is opposing and reforming it. Second, there is a constant tendency to equilibrium of opposing forces. In other words, conflict tends toward some form of adjustment in which active opposition ceases. Forces that clash, and neither of which can annihilate the other, ultimately seek to settle down upon some *modus vivendi*. How these principles apply in the matter we have under discussion is obvious. The members of the Kingdom must be aggressive or they will simply be mastered by and conformed to the worldly environment. In their informal relations with men they must maintain a tense and positive spirituality; they must be constantly seeking to control, to master, to reform the worldly influences in the midst of which they live. The same attitude must be maintained in their institutional relations. They must strive without ceasing to breathe the Christian spirit into the social functions which they are performing, and to bring the entire operation of these functions under the control of Christian

principles. Otherwise, they will fall into the habits and customs of the world, being moulded by the worldly spirit of their daily occupations; insensibly their ideals will be tarnished, and they will compromise. The opposing forces will find their equilibrium. But when that equilibrium is reached the citizen of the Kingdom will be found living a divided and inconsistent life; shorn at once of the outreaching enthusiasm and the inward peace which should be his. This equilibrium at times becomes relatively stable. The individual character crystallizes in this inconsistency. The life is divided into two segments, one sacred, the other secular, in which two antagonistic principles are regnant. The man passes from one dominion into the other, changing sovereigns without any consciousness of the ethical significance of what he is doing. In a use of the phrase quite different from that of the prophet, "the lion and the lamb lie down together" in the inmost chamber of the man's life.

Corresponding to this segmentation of the individual life, a curious correlation of these opposite ethical principles takes place in the social organization. Economic and political systems are lifted to a level on which the more crude and harsh forms of conflict are condemned; but they are still regarded as a field in which secular principles are necessarily dominant; in which a thoroughgoing application of the principles of Jesus is not possible. In them only a lower type of

Christian life is practicable, the "lay type." Flanking these institutions, which occupy the center of the secular sphere, are others which are also secular, but which widely diverge from one another in character and tendency. On the right are the educational institutions, which have for their aim the training of men into higher efficiency. At first they were adjuncts of the religious institution, but have been gradually taken under the wing of the political, or organized as private corporations, until they have been for the most part thoroughly secularized. On the left stands a group of such institutions as the saloons and the brothels, whose business it is to minister to the baser appetites and passions. They are perfunctorily condemned, but complacently tolerated as "necessary evils." In truth they are so thoroughly integrated in the system of secular society that for an indefinite period they were not seriously antagonized; and since they have been challenged or threatened with destruction they boldly claim to be essential elements of it, and are in fact so interrelated with the economic and political activities that they cannot be driven out of the field without a very disturbing agitation, and can frequently rally to their defence the whole array of economic and political forces.

Off to itself stands the church, the distinctly religious organization. Its activities are supposed to be dominated by the principles of Jesus,

and in these activities the minister is wholly absorbed. Being limited to this "sacred sphere" of life, he is supposed to be able to lead a Christian life of a higher type than the layman, who is necessarily occupied with secular affairs. But, though set apart from other institutions in popular thought, the church is in fact so closely knit up with the economic and political life and so thoroughly dominated by those who direct secular activities that it is seriously handicapped in making a bold and unflinching application of its principles to all departments of life. In a word, the world is found holding the purse-strings of the church. In the interior of church life as without, the Kingdom forces and the world forces are often found in a state of comparatively stable equilibrium.

Between the sacred and secular departments of life stand a group of institutions which may with equal truth be described as "sacred" or "secular." They are the orphanages, hospitals, asylums, etc., whose function it is to care for and, when possible, rehabilitate the wrecks of society. They perhaps constitute the most tangible or visible, though by no means the most real, evidences of the fact that the Kingdom of God, notwithstanding the relatively stable equilibrium with the world, is a living social force.

But no equilibrium of forces is ever absolutely stable. There have been times when the social situation just described seemed immovably fixed.

So it was in the Middle Ages, when the division between the sacred and secular spheres and callings of life was most definitely recognized, while at the same time the sacred institution was formally united with the secular and in theory dominated it. But disturbances and upheavals inevitably came. The fermenting forces of the Kingdom were at work; and in the present time the equilibrium is so thoroughly upset that some timid souls who love the Kingdom are fearful lest the essential forces of social cohesion are giving way. It is in fact only an extensive disturbance of the balance of forces which had been in a state of comparative equilibrium; and it opens the way for a great advance towards the triumph of the Kingdom over the world. When one apprehends the deeper significance of the present unrest, of the decadence of old and the development of new standards, of the invincible optimism which characterizes the struggle for the enthronement of new ideals, he cannot fail to see that it foretokens the readjustment of all the elements of our social life on a higher level—and perhaps that level will be high enough to make visible above the horizon the sun which is to bring in a day whose brightness, as contrasted with the darkness of this time, will seem the full glory of the reign of righteousness.

It appears, then, that there are three methods by which the Kingdom may seek to effect a transformation of the social organization—construc-

tion, destruction and reconstruction. The *constructive* work consists first and fundamentally in the inculcation of ethical ideals as a necessary basis of the various forms of its institutional activity. Ideals influence the activity of men in their organized as well as in their informal relations; though their control over organized life is realized much more slowly than over individual, personal acts, because institutions have a greater inertia and resist change more effectively. In the second place, it consists in the creation and development of new social structures, through which the forces of the Kingdom may freely operate. The first and most important of these is the church. In the church the Christians segregated themselves, as far as that was practicable, from the world. Even in this institution, however, they could not, as we have observed, keep the line of demarcation absolute. By the side of the church a whole series of benevolent institutions sprang up as embodiments of the spirit of love which sought to bring both temporal and spiritual aid to the friendless and unfortunate. As the state fell more and more under the influence of the Christian spirit, it also established such agencies for social relief.

By *destruction* is meant the process of outlawing and eliminating social agencies which minister to and develop the lower passions, and so debase men. This is a necessary and important process in social progress. There is no other

appropriate attitude for Christians to assume toward such organized vices.

By *reconstruction* is meant the reorganization of institutions which are essential to the social life, but which need to be brought under the sway of motives and principles which will cause them to perform their function more directly in the interest of all.

The stress may fall now upon one and now upon another of these methods. In the early days the benevolent spirit of Christianity busied itself mainly in construction. The conditions were such as to offer no other available channel for the expression of the energies of the Kingdom. At a later time efforts were made in the direction of reconstruction; but it was undertaken through organic union of the church with the state, and resulted in an equilibrium of the opposing forces of the Kingdom and the world, and in a more profound reconstruction of the church than of the state. Subsequently it was found that an advance could be made in the reconstruction of the political organ only by severing this union; so that the church could bring its influence to bear in a more effective way by building up a higher ideal in the hearts of the people as the necessary foundation of the new state. This, together with other influences working in the same direction, has profoundly influenced the organization of the state and the spirit in which it is operated.

In quite recent times the method of destruc-

tion has been much insisted upon. Nominal Christians have become numerous enough to control the policies of the government, which, on the old plan, by undertaking to license and regulate various vices, had at once solidified them as a political force and entrenched them within the protection of the law. Against such a treatment of vice there has been a great revolt of the Christian conscience in recent times, and the effort has been made to extirpate such vicious institutions, root and branch, by prohibitive legislation. Great social improvements have resulted, but this crusade has nevertheless failed to accomplish all that has been hoped for. The difficulty of the program has been far greater than expected, and has forced attention to an aspect of the situation which was not clearly apparent at first, viz., that these vicious institutions which so successfully defy the indignant Christian conscience have their roots deep in the economic life.

The more the economic situation is studied the more obvious it becomes that both political corruption and organized vice must be attacked through an economic reformation, without ceasing the direct frontal assault upon them. In other words, more attention must be given to the method of reconstruction. The economic organization has resisted as yet more successfully than any other of the essential social functions the application of the principles of the Kingdom. But to-day this central stronghold of the spirit of the world, from

which radiate malign influences in all directions, is under heavy fire. Its destruction is not aimed at and would mean the collapse of the entire social order; but its reconstruction into conformity to the ideals of the Kingdom would amount almost to a social regeneration. It would release the church from its principal handicap; it would avert the most serious menace of home life; it would open the way for the introduction of higher spiritual ideals into education; it would weaken and isolate the institutions of organized vice and make their destruction a far less formidable task; it would cut the tap-root of political corruption, and the state would be vastly uplifted in its ideals. As it is, the coercive and restraining function of government must absorb the greater part of the energy of the state, while at the same time its coercion and restraint are inequitably applied. That there is so much evil to repress is in large part due to the fact that the economic machinery is dominated by wrong ideals and is operated in a wrong spirit. In the repression of evils, the government is seriously perverted by the same economic forces which, under the control of a false ideal, are largely responsible for the existence of the evils. The collective energy which is operative through the government is largely used up in the effort to repress evils which have one of their main sources at least in the operation of the collective energy through the wrongly organized economic agencies. It is an irrational situation.

The Kingdom of God cannot be realized solely by the constructive and destructive processes. We may build homes for the homeless, asylums for the insane, hospitals for the sick, rescue missions for the "down and out," etc., but a deeper look into the situation reveals the fact that much of this human wreckage—just how much nobody knows—is ground out by the great, unchristian economic organization itself. Again, we make stringent laws, erect courthouses and jails, elaborate legal machinery, and spend much time and energy in the suppression of lawlessness, which nevertheless goes on increasing, and largely because the social organization itself produces it. The supreme need to-day is the reorganization of the great central functions of the secular life. If the economic system were reorganized in accordance with the ethics of the Kingdom, the collective energy which expresses itself in political activity might be more largely and indeed chiefly devoted to positive measures for the advancement of human welfare along the lines of material and spiritual achievement. The great desideratum of our age is that the functions of economic and political life, through which by far the largest volume of collective energy is organized and applied, should be wholly mastered by the spirit of service and turned into mighty engines for the speedy bringing in of the Kingdom of God. Only thus can the Kingdom accomplish its final and complete victory over the world.

CHAPTER III

THE INDIVIDUAL PERSONALITY

We have seen that Jesus appeared at the time when the ancient, narrow, closed-group organization of society had been broken up by the combination and commingling of the multifarious groups in one great empire. That was the necessary preparation for the emergence into full consciousness of the value of the individual. At that period a number of ethical teachers appeared who apprehended with more or less clearness the central value of the individual, and embodied the principle with more or less consistency in their systems. But in the evangel of Jesus it found its most perfect expression; and the emphasis it received in His teaching has never been exceeded since. So strongly did He stress it and so constantly did He assume it in all His religious and ethical doctrine, that many of His followers have not unnaturally attributed to Him an extreme individualism and failed to grasp the broader social implications of His message. He came "in the fullness of time," when the systems of religious and ethical thought organized in and adapted to the old régime had disintegrated and the inner life of mankind had not been reorganized about a new centre. That new centre was the individual

rather than the clan or tribe or nation. More properly speaking, the social consciousness was so broadened as to include all humanity, and in this consciousness the individual necessarily appears as the centre of value. It was Jesus who effected this transference of emphasis. This was one of His chief contributions to the world as a teacher. Was He right? In quite recent times the pendulum of thought seems to be swinging back toward the group as the significant social unit, and we hear frequent suggestions that the individualism of the doctrine of Jesus unfits it to supply the ethical need of this age. This is a matter of very great importance, and it behooves us to investigate it.

Certainly no moral teacher has ever beheld in the individual human being the unspeakable preciousness which Jesus saw in him. This conception of man is rooted in His central religious doctrine; it is involved in His representation of the divine character. The holiness and righteousness of God's character, as set forth in the Hebrew Scriptures, He accepted in the fullest sense; the mercy of Jehovah He expanded and exalted into the generic attribute of love, which He makes the supreme and essential characteristic of the divine nature. John sums up this doctrine in the noble aphorism, "God is Love," which one can easily believe was borrowed from Jesus; which, at any rate, is manifestly a condensation of His teaching, even if this sentence did not actually

fall from His lips. Love does not, like mercy, denote an emotional attitude of God called forth by the helpless dependence of men who are appealing to His strength, but rather the characteristic attitude of the divine will toward the whole creation—the mainspring of the divine activity. By the original impulse of His nature, God ever seeks the well-being and only the well-being of all men. This quality is positive and aggressive. The outflow of the divine energy is but the streaming into action of a benevolent and beneficent purpose. God loves because it is His fundamental nature to love, and any disposition or attitude which is contrary to love is impossible to Him.

The enthronement of love in God's character by no means dwarfs or overshadows His holiness; and yet the ethical repulsions of His nature do not set bounds to the sphere in which His love operates, though they do necessarily modify its expressions. Within the realm of natural law God treats all alike, causing His sun to shine and His rain to fall on both the good and the bad. In His ethical judgments He sharply discriminates; but in His discriminating apportionment of awards there is no suggestion that His treatment of the morally bad is not motived by love. Certainly it does not flow from a motive that is inconsistent with love. The strength of His moral reaction against the evil is really the measure of His desire to bless them. His love is profoundly

ethical; this does not mean that it does not extend to the wicked, but simply that moral perfection is the blessing which He seeks so energetically to bestow. Wrong disposition and conduct He reprobates with the whole strength of His being, because the wrong ruins and destroys those whom He tries to perfect and glorify. If we think for a moment upon the whole motive and process of redemption as preached by Jesus it will appear that the divine love, so far from stopping at the line which divides the good from the evil, extends with equal energy towards both poles of the moral universe, but manifests itself in quite different ways in the two directions. Sin does not turn back the current of the divine love, but transforms it from complacent joy into a tragedy of spiritual suffering on account of the sinful, somewhat as the resistance of the non-conducting carbon converts the stream of electric energy into white light. But this reduces in no degree the retributive action of the divine justice, which we may liken to the heat generated by the conversion of the electric current into light. In the harmony of a morally perfect character justice is only the reverse side of love. In the thought of Jesus, God's character is a perfect harmony; and His action is not, as it so often is with imperfect men, the resultant of conflicting emotions and contradictory desires.

Again, God's love is not limited by race lines. The God of Jesus is the God of the whole human

race, since all races have an equal share in His benevolent interest. If He bestows special gifts upon or confides special revelations to any one race, it is only in order that the race so favoured may be the purveyors of that blessing to all others; and the race which declines this mission and seeks to appropriate and use any boon as an exclusively racial asset is condemned, and in the sure processes of the divine judgment must suffer the penalty of humiliation and see its function transferred to another. This lesson is impressively taught in the parable of the vineyard.

However, it might be alleged that in His remarks to the Syro-Phœnician woman, Jesus exhibited a trace of Jewish racial pride and exclusiveness.[1] Some difficulty may be frankly admitted in interpretating this passage in harmony with the contention of this paragraph. According to the record He did use the language of Jewish haughtiness and contempt for other peoples on this occasion; but this was so unlike Him, so contrary to His bearing in all similar situations, that it is quite impossible to harmonize it with His general disposition and conduct except by supposing that He assumed such an attitude for a special reason; and such a reason is suggested on the face of the narrative. He especially desired at this time to withdraw from public view, and knew that to grant this woman's request would inevitably, as it did in fact, give publicity to His

[1] Matt. 15:21-28: Mark 7:24-30.

presence. He also felt that His efforts during His brief career on earth should be limited to work among the Jewish people; in which there is nothing inconsistent with His consciousness of a mission to the whole human race. For it is clearly the order of the world that certain races and nations have assigned to them great functions to perform in the interest of all mankind; and it has always been true that the great leaders of men have wrought most effectively for all peoples who have done most to bring their own people to a full realization and performance of their special mission. Whatever may be one's theological notions as to the meaning of the character and work of Jesus, there is no reason to assume that He was an exception to this rule; and there is, therefore, no reason to suppose that His disinclination to extend His personal activities beyond His own race indicated any racial limitations upon His sympathy. That He looked to the ultimate extension of the benefits of His work to all mankind it is quite impossible to deny with any plausibility whatever.

Some interpreters have assumed that He hesitated on this occasion and used the harsh language of Jewish bigotry in order to develop to the maximum the woman's humility and faith. However that was, the facts are that He did *not* send her away unblessed; that He *did* grant her request, apparently at His own inconvenience and peril; that His language and bearing were, how-

ever, so exceptional that they can be consistently explained only on the hypothesis of His having had some special reason or reasons for doing so, whether they appear in the record or not. How is it possible to suppose that He had the exclusiveness and intolerance of the Jews when one considers His attitude and conduct toward the Samaritans and the publicans? It is incredible. Many of His utterances and acts show conclusively that in His own disposition and in His conception of the relations of God to men He dwelt in a region far above racial pride or national exclusiveness. The group-consciousness of Jesus was co-extensive with the human race.

What has just been said of His disregard of racial limitations is even more emphatically true as to His attitude toward class distinctions. He exhibited, perhaps, a keener consciousness of these than of racial lines of cleavage; and this is not a matter of wonder. The terrible injustices which grow out of class inequalities are more numerous, more inveterate, and spring from deeper roots in human nature than those which grow out of racial divisions. Racial repulsions originate in the strangeness of look, of custom, of speech, etc., which is the result of isolation and divergent development; but, if these repulsions are not accentuated and inflamed by special causes, they are naturally and inevitably toned down as intercommunication is extended and contact becomes more frequent. When not aggravated by war or given

a sort of unnatural immortality by the subjection of one race to another as an inferior caste in the same society, they tend to disappear as a result of the ordinary social processes of political, economic, and intellectual intercourse between peoples. On the contrary, class distinctions and repulsions are the effects of two causes, one of which will never pass away, and the other will pass away only when the Kingdom of God becomes a realized fact. These are the natural inequalities of men and the selfishness of men. So long as the old commonplace motive of selfish pride continues to operate in a society of unequal men, society will tend to divide into classes, each of which will seek to keep itself closed against those which are inferior; repulsion will exist between them; and the injustices which grow out of the elevation of class above class in power and privilege will continue. If the effort be made to blot out those class distinctions with their iniquities by means of a revolution, it turns out to be only a temporary inversion of the social hierarchy and the oppression of the oppressors by the oppressed.

It is true that the growth of industrialism seems to tend toward the breaking up of the fixed caste system of social organization, and the substitution of "open classes" for the hereditary stratification. This mitigates in a measure the injustice of the system. Under these conditions it does not paralyze initiative by shutting men up in the rigid framework of closed classes, but

opens to the lowly the possibilities of rising in the social scale. But by changing the standard of superiority from birth and breeding to wealth, the social valuation of men is reduced to a more materialistic basis; and the injustices suffered by the wage-earning class in their subjection to capitalistic masters, if less fatal to human aspirations, are even more keenly felt than those experienced by the serfs of the Middle Ages; and it is a question whether on the whole the wrong done to essential humanity is not quite as great. Industrialism is doubtless more favourable than serfdom for the stronger, more capable members of the labouring class; but for the less capable it may be more unfavourable, crushing them down under the iron heel of competition to a degradation even more hopeless.

Furthermore, the contempt of one class for another is more humiliating and intolerable to the human spirit than the contempt of one race for another. The contempt of one race for another is usually reciprocated; the member of the contemned race does not experience much suffering, or, as the psychologists would say, "depression of the self-feeling," because he is supported by his own race pride. In fact, as already hinted, the major part of the suffering and injustice connected with distinctions of race comes when one race is subjected to another and the caste spirit inflames and embitters the racial antipathy. It is the pride of the unfortunate and strong look-

ing down upon and trampling the weak and unfortunate which has engendered more bitterness, wrought more injustice, produced more helpless and hopeless suffering, and done more to obstruct personal development than any other cause that has a social origin.

Whether the foregoing suggestions afford the explanation or not, it is a fact that class distinctions seemed to attract the attention of Jesus more than the racial. The outrageous iniquities that have their roots in the class spirit confronted Him everywhere, offended His sense of justice and contradicted the truth which lay nearest to His heart, namely, that God's love embraces all men alike. His soul rose in protest against the falsehood which underlay the whole social organization and controlled the relations of classes to one another. Especially did this false spirit of class pride arouse his indignation and call forth His hot denunciation when it clothed itself, as it usually does, in a religious garb and sought to sanctify itself with the divine approval. He smote it with the lightning of His moral wrath and turned with especial tenderness to the weak, the poor, the social outcasts, offering them the Kingdom of God. They were human; they were objects of the divine love; as the victims of pride and selfish power, they were in a very real sense the especial objects of interest in the movement He was inaugurating. Their hope of justice, their chance to realize their humanity lay in the suc-

cess of His revolutionary enterprise. Through the open doorway of the Kingdom lay their way of escape from the thralldom in which their essential humanity was stunted and marred. But His doctrine did not represent any personal hostility to the rich and powerful, for their pride of position, their disdain for the downtrodden, their pharisaic assumption of superiority, their false claim to preference in the eyes of God defaced and degraded their own humanity even more disastrously than it did that of the unfortunate victims of the unrighteous social order. The proud and powerful, as well as the weak and humble, can realize their humanity only in the Kingdom of God.

The love of God is for man as man; simple and essential humanity is the precious thing. No one class or race monopolizes humanity; therefore, no class or race can set boundaries to God's love. Even the moral differences between men can only modify its expression. Wherever there is a germ of humanity, thither flows the stream of His love for the purpose of fertilizing and developing it. Wherever there is a trace of the human, it is a lodestone which attracts the attention and interest of the heart of God.

But if the divine love is universally comprehensive in its scope, it is more than an active goodwill toward men *en masse*. It is said that one may love a group without loving the individuals composing it—love man, but not men. But God's

love individualizes. No single human being is so insignificant as to be lost in the crowd. "God so loved the world,"—that sounds so general that a lone and feeble man might wonder if he by himself meant anything to God; but the very next words show that this love as it came into the world on its beneficent mission individualized men in the most intensive way,—"that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life." "Not a sparrow falleth to the ground without your Father;" and Jesus adds, "Are ye not of much more value than many sparrows?" "The very hairs of your head are numbered." How beautifully do the stories of the lost coin, the lost sheep and the lost son teach the lesson that God's love is not merely a general good-will directed toward groups of men, but is the outgoing of a divine, solicitous, beneficent energy which focalizes upon individuals and recognizes in them a value which justifies any sacrifice for their redemption and fills heaven with joy at the recovery of one.

Not only does the divine love stream forth in fullness and in minuteness of care toward each individual, but seeks to evoke a personal response from each and thus to establish a personal relationship between each individual and God, a relationship which is intimate and immediate. Human priesthood is abolished. The priesthood has a function only in the group-religions referred to in a previous chapter. When religion becomes

primarily an affair not of the group, but of the individual, the priest disappears. In a group-religion a special class of functionaries is needed to represent the whole body in its collective relations with the deity; but when for that type of religion is substituted one in which the deity establishes relations with individuals as such, the priestly function by that very fact ceases. The group religion and the priestly function are so vitally related that wherever the latter has been brought over into or reconstituted in Christendom, Christianity has tended logically and inevitably to assume the form of a national church, a sort of revival of the ancient type of religion; and the principle of immediate individual relationship to God has been subordinated and obscured. In the teaching of Jesus repentance is a personal thing; regeneration is personal; faith is personal; obedience is personal; salvation is personal, and is conditioned solely upon personal acts and attitudes; responsibility to God is personal and individual. Into the inner sanctuary of the life, where the soul comes into personal communion with God, no human authority, individual or collective, has the right to enter. That sanctuary is inviolable. In the Gospel of John, in which the noble mysticism of the mind of Jesus finds its best expression, He is reported as saying, "If any man love me he will keep my words; and my Father will love him and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." Surely the

intimacy of spiritual relationship could go no further. The individual personality could receive no higher consecration. And this is a privilege open to all men.

To Jesus the only significant thing in the life of man is the relation between persons. The universe which has meaning for Him is a system of personal relationships. At the centre of it is God, and all men are included within its compass. He deals with personal relations primarily. Hence His ethic is concrete and personal in a high degree. For Him human society is but the personal relations of men to men. In recent times we have come to have a growing consciousness of society as an organism, a great complex system of functions. Our thought is taken up with the consideration of social structures and their interrelations and interactions. Modern life is so highly organized, differentiated into so many different corporate activities, that to many thinkers personal relations do not any longer seem to be the most significant thing in social life. It has been pointed out that the relations of men to one another are, with the higher evolution of society, becoming more and more impersonal as they become more functional. As all activities become more highly specialized, human relations through these functions necessarily become more fractional, involving less and less of the personalities of those related. For instance, one sits down to his dinner-table, which is supplied by the work

of a large number of persons distantly removed in space, with whom he has no personal contact, of whose very existence he has no knowledge except by inference; and his contacts even with those who do the final work of preparing the food for his palate are becoming more perfunctory and non-personal. How much of the personality is involved in one's relations with those who make his clothes, or bring his mail, or transport him from place to place, or protect his life and property? And so with all those functions by which his life is served. Is this process to continue until all social relations are quite emptied of their personal significance? It is this tendency which is giving a new form to the moral problem of life, and is leading some thinkers to question whether the teaching of Jesus, which certainly has for its chief moral content the ethics of personal relations, is adequate to the needs of modern life. The question may seem to be purely theoretical in character, but is really an intensely practical and vital one. If the life of every man is maintained by a lengthening series of corporate and impersonal functions, and if his own activities are only links in such a series by which other lives are maintained, do we not, it is asked, need a new morality adapted to this more elaborate organization of modern society?

Before answering, let us ask in what sense are these functional relations impersonal? In a general way, without undertaking a precise

analysis, we may divide human relations into four or five classes. First, there are those which involve the whole personality, as for instance the relations of husband and wife, parent and child. Second, there are those which, while not involving such absolute intimacy of personal intercourse, do nevertheless bring personalities into a closeness and fullness of contact which at times approximates the intimacy of domestic life. In this somewhat indefinite class belongs friendship in all its degrees and forms. Third, there are those which are direct, but which involve only a minimum of immediate personal reaction. Such are the purely "business relations" in all their varied forms, in which persons meet whose only interest in meeting is the performance of some regular function. The persons meet, but it is like the meeting of two spheres; the contact is only at a single point. Fourth, there are those which are indirect and functional. The persons do not meet at all, are separated in space and often in time also, by greater or smaller distances, and may never see one another at all, and yet are related through the far-reaching effects of their activity; as, for instance, the several persons who co-operated in making the typewriter on which these words are written are functionally related to the writer. There is, moreover, a very real sense in which each individual is related with all persons in society, extending in our modern world even out to the limits of humanity; and such in-

definite and remote relations constitute a fifth class. It is obvious that the number of persons to whom one in a complex society is related in these several ways increases vastly as the relations become less personal; and the more complicated the social life becomes, the greater becomes the relative importance of these lines of interaction which involve little or no personal contact and which are therefore denominated impersonal.

But if in one sense of the word they are impersonal, in another they are not. It is well to remember that, however much functions and structures may be differentiated and elaborated, however far removed in space and time and however unknown to one another may be the individuals so connected, the fact remains that human society is composed of *persons;* that all the numerous social activities are only relatively fixed modes in which *persons* are reacting on one another to their injury or well-being. It is extremely important that this fact should be kept vivid in the consciousness of all men. The number of people who are related to each other in a highly developed society is so great and so constantly increasing, and those relations are for the most part so indirect, and so fractional when direct, that it is difficult not to think of the whole complex of relations as a vast and intricate mechanism, an almost limitless network of lines along which impersonal forces operate. This is

due, in the first place, to the limitation of the human imagination. Because we can not mentally represent to ourselves separately all the individual persons involved in these relations, we think of them abstractly, apart from their concrete individualities, as so many impersonal entities. Then, too, it is implied in the very idea of a highly complex organization that the functions in which this multitude of persons are engaged must be performed according to fixed and regular modes of procedure. These modes of procedure cannot possibly be formulated and operated so as to take cognizance of and conform to the idiosyncracies and peculiar circumstances of the separate persons affected. Hence the extension of what is called "red tape" in the whole system of modern life, which gives it the appearance of mere mechanism. Many of these activities are performed with a regularity and lack of consideration of the peculiar circumstances of individuals which strongly remind one of the operation of natural forces.

Out of this mechanical or non-personal conception of social relations spring some of the most serious dangers to society. In those relations in which men come face to face in fully conscious personal contacts, the moral obligation to benevolence and helpfulness is generally recognized; but it is not so in these so-called impersonal relations in the organized relations of society. The failure to realize the personal effects

of these activities gives a wide opportunity for the selfish impulses to work unchecked by moral law. Here we touch the root of the social problem of our age. The employer deals with "labour," only dimly conscious of the fact that he is dealing with living, throbbing, striving, suffering persons, his own human brothers. So the labourer is dealing with the "capitalist;" so the merchant and the customer in their dealing with one another—and so on through the whole list of the functional relations of society. The corporation magnate adopts a policy under the influence of the motive of gain with but little realization of the personal effects of that policy in innumerable lives far removed from him, perhaps, in time and space.

It is perfectly obvious that the supreme need to-day is a deep and constant realization by all men that the relations of this kind, while impersonal in the sense that they do not involve personal contact, are intensely personal in their ultimate results; and thus it appears how imperatively we need to bring them under the control of those simple principles of personal ethics so luminously taught by Jesus. Men will learn before we are through with the agitations that grow out of the enormous extension of social organization, that the ethical principles of Jesus not only cannot be set aside as out of date, but must be applied on a vastly larger scale, must be made, in fact, the controlling principles in all

the increasingly specialized relations of men. The very fact that the various forms of social work must be reduced to system, that is, to regularly related and fixed modes of procedure, without regard to the peculiarities and special circumstances of individuals, only emphasizes the demand that all of them shall be conceived and operated in a distinctly benevolent spirit, and that those engaged in them shall have imagination and sympathy. For the very reason that the system does not bring men into full personal contact and must be general and rigid in method, it should have for its aim helpfulness and not exploitation, service and not gain; and the functionaries should be persons with hearts in harmony with this purpose, rather than bits of unfeeling machinery. The great social processes must not go on with the blind inconsiderateness and regularity with which material forces operate, blighting or blessing with equal indifference. The more machine-like the social relations and activities become in the elaborateness of their organization and the unbending precision of their operation, the more we need to animate them with the spirit of loving service. Otherwise the social organization, growing ever more complicated and at the same time more impersonal in the spirit in which its many functions are performed, will give an ever larger and freer play-room to the self-seeking impulses and will afford to the powerful a more efficient means of exploiting the

weak. The outcome will be the embodiment in social life of the ethics of Nietzsche, which elevates the selfishness of strength into the supreme law of righteousness. Society must finally be organized on the basis of the ethics of Nietzsche or that of Jesus. It must approach the ideal of a great co-operative brotherhood in which each obtains his maximum of development by helping all others to make the most of themselves, each recognizing in personal development the supreme good and holding the personalities of others of equal value with his own, thus knitting himself together with others by the golden thread of love into an association for mutual aid in self-realization; or it must advance toward the ideal of an hierarchical pyramid at the top of which sits the Supreme Overman, whose superior capacity has mastered the social machinery and uses it without ruth or scruple to subordinate to His own will, which knows no higher law, the interests and energies of all other men according to the measure of their weakness. The one ideal aims to enthrone the God of love among men; the other, to develop out of the uncompromising struggle of selfish human interests a sort of demigod who shall be more than man in strength and less than man in character. The realization of the one ideal would be like heaven; the fulfillment of the other, like hell. But under the conditions of modern life the momentum must steadily increase in one direction or the other. If the social system

does not become an organism animated by love, which values and exalts individual personality, it must become the medium of conscienceless force, which destroys personality and converts human beings into mere parts of a vast machine. Both tendencies are present and conflicting in our present life; and answering to them are social philosophies—one of which sees in personality a spiritual reality which is the key to the meaning of the social process; the other of which reduces personality to a mere convergence in one human organism of innumerable lines of material force.

There can, however, be no question as to which tendency with its related philosophy will ultimately prevail. The mechanizing tendency is very strong, and the corresponding materialistic philosophy is very dogmatic and confident in utterance; but against the violence which they do to personality the world is rising, and the protest becomes more vigorous with every passing day, because the development of society, notwithstanding the mechanizing tendency, stimulates the development of personality. Men are men, and they inevitably rebel against being reduced to the category of things. This revolt against the mechanizing tendency is directing the thoughts of men with fresh interest to the doctrine of Jesus. More than any of the world's great teachers He has laid deep foundations for the value of the individual person. He based it upon the cornerstone of the universe. The simple

human being, apart from the accidents of birth or breeding, of fortune or of social status, is of intrinsic and supreme worth; and the development of all individual persons to the fullness of the rich possibilities of humanity is the ideal which defines and measures all values whatsoever. All the collective processes which promote individual men in their personal progress are good; and good in so far as they do this. All institutions are good or bad as they prove to be instrumentalities to this end or against it. Individuals themselves are good if they consciously adopt this as the end of their activity, and bad if any other motive is central in their lives. To this end God Himself is working. The multiplication and perfection of human personalities is the end of the universe so far as it comes within the purview of man. The world-process is like a tree which must be judged by its fruit, and its fruit is individual personality. The failure of a single human being in whom there dwells the germ of personality to attain to its fulfillment is a tragedy which casts its shadow upon the whole universal process. To fail to help another whom one might help to attain this fruition of existence is to fail in part in attaining the end of one's own being; to be the cause of that failure in another is the most damnable of sins. "It were better that a millstone were hanged about one's neck and he cast into the midst of the sea." The ancient philosophers speculated about the *summum bonum,* the

supreme good; and modern philosophers are debating whether there be any supreme and intrinsic good, whether all values be not relative. For Jesus, the supreme and intrinsic good is personality moving toward the goal of perfection, attaining ever to a higher capacity for self-direction and to an increasingly free and harmonious adjustment to the central reality of the universe.

CHAPTER IV

INEQUALITY AND SERVICE

No TEACHER has recognized more fully than Jesus the natural inequality of men. He was no extravagant enthusiast, no visionary. He had a profound respect for facts. The crude conception of equality which gained wide currency in the French Revolution and received official expression, so to speak, in the American Declaration of Independence, has no basis in His teaching. Men are unequal. This fact He not only perceived, but recognized as of divine origin. Personal inequality is rooted in the will of God, which to Him is the fundamental cause of the universe. It not only is a fact, but must always be a fact. This is clearly implied in the parables of the talents and of the pounds, and is an assumption underlying much of His other teaching. His purpose never contemplated the making of men equal. The equality of man is not included in His ideal as a factor of a perfect social order. The sober thought of even the strongest believers in democracy has come to the position of Jesus in regard to this matter.

The deeper the insight we get into the fundamental processes of the social life, the more im-

possible does it appear that men should ever become equal. Consider these two correlative facts—first, that specialization is going on all the time in the occupations of men; second, that differentiation is likewise going on all the time in the individualities of men. The one involves the other. In other words, the social relations and activities are becoming more and more varied and differences between the social units are constantly appearing more and more. It is not practically possible, it is not even thinkable that this process should continue on an ever enlarging scale without giving rise to inequalities. This proposition hardly needs demonstration; but let us suppose a social group consisting of a certain number of individuals with a certain number of functions in its organization. Then suppose that the number of individuals quadruples and that in the meantime the forms of social activity in the group are subdivided and multiplied to twice their original number. It is obvious that the increased number of persons living in this more complex social life and engaged in its more highly specialized activities will be far more varied in their individualities than the original number, because the conditions under which their several personalities are developed and the influences which shape them will be more varied. But this leaves out of account another cause of differences among men, which is incalculable in its operation, but which we nevertheless know to be a most im-

portant fact in the individual and social life, viz., what may be called "spontaneous variation;" that is, changes of type and individual divergences from type for which there is no assignable cause unless we accept the religious explanation and attribute them to the determination of the sovereign will of God.

Now, if we should assume that in the beginning all the persons of the above mentioned hypothetical group were equal, it is not conceivable that this process of differentiation, due both to the influences of a changing environment and to spontaneous variation, should go on among them without resulting in differences of personal level as well as personal differences on the same level. But the assumption of original equality is inadmissible. There has never been a human group all the members of which were, at any stage of its history, exactly equal, though personal equality of its units is much more nearly approximated in the early than in the later stages of its development. Here again we find that the thought of Jesus runs parallel with natural laws. Inequality is the inevitable result of natural social processes, says science; it is, says Jesus, rooted in the divine purpose which is working itself out in the evolution of society.

But while Jesus accepted the fact of inevitable inequality as a part of the divine order, His attitude was wholly different toward the unnatural and artificial inequalities which spring out of a

bad social system. The inevitable inequalities which would exist in a perfect society and the inequalities of actual society do not by any means coincide. This becomes more glaringly manifest the more one looks into the situation in the economic and political spheres. In the first place, one of the most obvious facts of life is that by reason of inequitable social arrangements the actual adjustments of men are not determined by the measure of personal values. It is a common thing—too common almost to attract attention—that many men enjoy material advantages and social positions far superior to multitudes of their fellows to whom, measured on the scale of personal values, they are inferior. In the second place, by reason of the inequitable social adjustments many men who are born with superior abilities are shut out from the opportunity of developing them and must go through life with stunted personalities. In the third place, on account of the irrational distribution of material advantages and personal opportunities, multitudes of people in each generation are brought into the world under such conditions as to preclude the possibility of their being born with normal human capacity, foredoomed, as the result of iniquitous social arrangements, to weakness and inefficiency from the very inception of their being. For instance, what chance is there that a child born in the unspeakable degradation of the slums should have even the average equip-

ment of personal power? As the result of a bad social system we have continually before our eyes not only the unfair distribution of material advantages and personal opportunities, but shocking examples of perverted faculties and degraded personalities, and, what is worse, the ghastly human freaks and malformations which were blighted and blasted before the very beginning of their conscious existence.

The fact that Jesus looked with complacency upon the inevitable fact of inequality among men does not imply that He set His approval upon existing inequalities. The iniquitous social organization is continually interfering with the operation of the natural laws of human variation. The God-made and society-made differences between men are entirely distinct in principle, though they are so interwoven in our actual social life that no one can tell just where the line of distinction should be drawn. Jesus acknowledged and approved the former; He condemned the latter and aimed at their absolute elimination by transforming society so that all its activities should be carried on according to the will of God. It is, therefore, either an exhibition of ignorance or an impious assumption bordering on blasphemy for those who, in the present order of society, are superior in any respect to their fellow-men complacently to assume that their superiority is a matter of divine predestination. Such an interpretation implies a

hyper-Calvinistic fatalism which has no foundation in the teaching of Jesus.

If, on the other hand, it be assumed, as is done by a certain school of social theorists, that the social organization is throughout the necessary product of strictly natural or material forces, is only one section of the general system of nature, the distinction between natural and social causation disappears. On the assumption of naturalistic, just as on the assumption of theological fatalism above mentioned, it is meaningless to speak of social *wrongs*. The fact that some men oppress and exploit others has no more moral significance than that wolves devour lambs; and the fact that a social system turns out a multitude of human perverts is no more a matter of moral concern than that abnormalities appear as incidents of natural processes on all the lower levels of being. This hypothesis justifies the doctrine of Nietzsche, but it contradicts the central doctrine of Jesus. All the teaching of Jesus proceeds on the assumption that, while all natural forces are expressions of the will of God and continue to operate in the human sphere, new and higher principles come into play in the realization of the divine purpose among men. Although the physical and biological laws are the same in the animal and the human spheres, man is not related to God simply as the beast is. He is an intelligent and moral being with an increasing ability to control natural forces so that they may

work out on the human level only beneficent results. Therein lie his dignity and responsibility. When, therefore, he avails himself of natural forces to defeat, oppress and exploit his fellowmen he becomes morally culpable; and if the social order, which is only the system of relations established by men among themselves, results in the mutilation or destruction of the humanity of men, it becomes a solemn duty to change the system. Dragons may "tear each other in their slime," and in doing so be blindly working out a beneficent purpose; but for men consciously to do likewise and justify themselves by an appeal to natural laws is really to subvert the order of nature and add hypocrisy to their beastliness.

How, then, is a social system in which men of varying grades of ability are related to one another to be prevented from producing these ill effects? Jesus gives us very little in the way of detailed solutions of social problems. He does not undertake to formulate the plans and specifications of the ideal social structure. But He does what is far more valuable; He declares and enjoins with extraordinary clearness and force the fundamental principle which must govern the social relations of men, and states specifically how that principle must be applied in a society of unequal men. That principle is love, and it must express itself in service. Each must serve all and serve in accordance with the measure of

his ability. The measure of ability is the measure of the obligation to serve. His doctrine may be briefly summed up thus: Each is under obligation to use whatever ability he has in the interests of all, and particularly of those who have not that kind of ability. If, therefore, one is superior to others in any element of power, he is bound to use that superiority in their interest. "If any man would be great among you let him be your servant, and he that would be greatest of all, let him be servant of all." This is the law of the Kingdom, the ideal society.

Now, it is manifest that the injustices of actual society arise from the fact that men use their powers selfishly, and especially that the strong use their exceptional power primarily in their own interest. Of course, the social order cannot be maintained at all, except as it is in some measure a system of mutual services. Look, for instance, at the economic functions. A railroad could not continue to operate if its managers did not in any measure serve the interests of its patrons. A grocer could not continue in business if he paid no attention whatever to the interests of those who need groceries; and so on through the whole list of the economic occupations. It is obviously the same in all other spheres of activity. Even those who are engaged in businesses of a hurtful kind can maintain themselves only by serving the abnormal appetites and passions of men—their mistaken interests.

Every variety of social activity comes under this law. The moment any form of activity comes to be generally recognized as altogether contrary to this law, it is branded as anti-social and put under the ban. Society must be maintained by mutual services. It would otherwise instantly dissolve into anarchy; and the more extended and complex the social organization, the more obvious does this become.

But in actual society these activities, as a rule, have for their primary motive the advancement of those who are engaged in them, and only secondarily the interests of others. They are service-functions, but not performed in the spirit of service. They are, therefore, largely perverted from their true purpose. Under the mastery of the self-seeking motives of the servant the interests of the served are obscured and often violated. As pointed out in a previous chapter, the remarkable specialization of such activities in a complex society gives a larger and freer play-room for selfish motives and vastly increases the opportunities of strong men to exploit the weak; and yet, at the same time, increasing specialization makes more prominent the fact of interdependence and emphasizes the necessity for the spirit of service. Out of this perversion of service-functions to selfish ends arise the innumerable abuses and wrongs which cry aloud for correction. And it becomes more obvious all the time that they can be corrected only by ac-

cepting the principle of Jesus as the supreme law of social life—each is bound to serve exactly according to the measure of his ability. Again and again has the whole social organism been threatened with anarchy or the torpor of death because men of superior ability have used their extraordinary power to compel the weak to serve them. It is the incidental service performed in these social activities which renders a social order possible at all; and not until men come to see in their various powers so many special opportunities for and calls to the service of their fellowmen, and in the social functions they perform so many channels through which their powers may be exerted in the interests of all, will the social order yield its proper fruitage in the progressive self-realization of all its members.

The selfish use of personal power is essentially divisive and disintegrating. There could not, therefore, exist a society in which this principle prevailed without check; but it has always been largely prevalent and is doubtless even yet dominant in our society; and wherever it is dominant the members of society are divided into factions and kept in an attitude of latent or open war all the time. Trust, mutual confidence, is reduced to minimum; and mutual suspicion is stimulated to the maximum. The field of co-operation is restricted, and occasions of conflict are multiplied. Heavy emphasis is placed upon rights, while duties are stressed very lightly. Each member

of society must sleep upon his arms. Society, under such conditions, can be only an unstable equilibrium of opposing forces, as the sole alternative to anarchy. Since men are unequal, the result under such conditions must be a hierarchical or an aristocratic constitution of society—the superposition of one class upon another; for the individuals of approximate equality, having a common interest as against those of unequal ability, are forced by the pressure to stand together. But within the classes the union must be more negative than positive—the bond being the outside pressure more than internal cohesion. In other words, their unity under such conditions will be due mainly to the relative weakness of the internal antagonism as compared with the external. They will be held together not by an identity of interests so much as by a community of distinct interests, between which conflicts will break out the moment the more dangerous conflict with other classes sufficiently abates. This has, in fact, taken place on a large scale in the development of society. In the most primitive times antagonism lay chiefly between the kinship groups—clans and tribes. In later times, as these groups grew large and differentiation within them proceeded, the antagonism of selfish interests divided society into definite classes between which there was latent or active opposition. The differentiating process first split the solidarity of the primitive group into distinct and opposing

sub-groups. In modern societies there has come as the effect, in large part, of the higher specialization of occupations a considerable disintegration of castes. The opposition of classes, therefore, is not so pronounced a feature of our life, and the antagonism of selfish interest takes a more individualistic form.

So prominent has this principle of antagonism been throughout the history of society that some sociologists have considered conflict as the main fact in the social history of man, and attributed to it the chief influence in fashioning the social structure. And there is no question that is has had a most important influence. The inequality of men selfishly used has proved always to be divisive in tendency, setting groups or individuals in opposition to one another, and this opposition has given hierarchical or aristocratic form to the social organization; and out of this arises envy, contempt, jealousy, strife.

If, on the other hand, personal powers were unselfishly used in service the inequalities of men would become bonds of cohesion among them; instead of driving them asunder, inequality would draw them together. It is not the fact that one man is superior to another in personal qualities that fills the heart of the inferior with bitterness towards him; it is the fact that he uses his superiority to trample the interests of the weaker under his feet, or that he in the pride of his superiority holds himself aloof and ignores or looks down

upon his inferior. When, on the contrary, the superior draws near in genuine human brotherhood, shows an interest in the inferior, and seeks, in simple human kindness without any patronizing or condescension, to use his powers to advance the weaker's interests, it establishes between them one of the strongest bonds known in human experience. Of course, no manifest consciousness of superiority, no trace of pride, of self-exaltation must mar the service. In such a relationship the soul of the inferior man opens and blossoms like a rose in June. The best that is in him is awakened. All his slumbering capacities are quickened; he grows, but does not grow faster than his helper, in all the finest and highest qualities of his nature.

It may be objected that while this is quite true and quite practicable in the informal relations of men, it is neither true nor practicable in the relations between men in the social organization. But it is practicable in these also. There are certain occupations which have been already subjected, at least approximately, to this law of service. The minister, for instance, is expected to use his special capacity, in which he is presumed to be superior to the members of his congregation, not for gain nor for the advancement of any selfish interest, but in the behalf of the people and for the benefit of the world. When he does so, as all know who have had experience in this relationship, it knits him and them to-

gether in the bonds of a most delightful fellowship. The Christian ministry, however, is not a form of activity which has been conquered and brought into subjection to the Christian spirit; it was rather a special creation of that spirit. Not so the work of teaching. That has been brought as a real conquest under the law of service, chiefly by the influence of Christianity. The man who now enters it for personal gain or for selfish reasons of any sort, is felt to be guilty of a sacrilege. Its primary attraction is the rich opportunity it offers for service. No one would commit himself or a loved one to the tutelage of a man who was known to be using the teaching function for any narrower or more selfish end than the improvement of his fellow-beings; and many of the sweetest and strongest ties which enrich human life are formed as a result of the relation between teacher and pupil. Other occupations also have been at least partially subjected to this law. The occupation of the physician is generally felt to be a form of service and is pursued in that spirit by many of those who engage in it, though the opportunities for gain which it offers have prevented its being mastered by the spirit of service as completely as it should be. Or, perhaps, the fact that it has not been more completely subjected to this law makes it possible to use it so successfully as a gainful occupation. In modern society the political function is theoretically a form of service, and the demand that

it shall be actually so is increasing. The occupations which are furthest removed from the sway of this law and which in the thought of most men lie quite beyond its jurisdiction, are the economic. There the motive of gain is frankly dominant, subject only to the limitation of common honesty, and not always too scrupulously observant of that limitation.

It is obvious that those forms of activity in the performance of which men are brought into the fullest personal contact have been most thoroughly pervaded by the spirit of service. For instance, the preacher, teacher and doctor in their vocations are manifestly and consciously working directly and centrally upon the personalities of those to whom they minister. The relations between men in the economic sphere are more partial and onesided, do not seem to involve so fully and so centrally their personalities. At any rate, whatever may be the explanation, the economic activities have resisted more effectually than other great social functions, the extension of the law of service over them. And it is exactly in those spheres where the law of service is not acknowledged and obeyed that the great conflicts rage. It is there that the inequalities of men breed bitterness, hatred, war; it is there that the strong are trampling the weak and the weak are grasping in desperation at violent means of relief. It is there that the menacing form of wild anarchy rises to disturb the peace of the victors in the

struggle, and to give the most convincing demonstration that the selfish use of personal powers, and especially of superior powers, is anti-social and destructive. Social peace and co-operation can be secured only by the full acceptance of the paradoxical principle of Jesus that the strong shall serve the weak.

But two important questions confront us here. The first is as to the righteousness of this principle. Would it not involve a disastrous inversion of values; would it not turn the very order of nature upside down? Would it not result in the sacrifice of the more valuable for the less valuable? This specific question will be discussed in the following chapter, and may be dismissed here. The second question is as to the value of conflict as a factor in the social process. Is not conflict an indispensable condition of progress? A plausible affirmative answer can be given. As we have before noted, there are not wanting able students of society who regard conflict as a most important, if not the chief, agency in the upward development of society. If this be true, the application of a principle which would eliminate conflict would stop development and prove the greatest of calamities. To go into this question thoroughly would take us too far afield. But in general it may be said that social progress consists in the development of an ever larger number of individuals of an ever higher type. Now, what effect has conflict between individuals upon per-

sonal character? Clearly it stimulates those qualities which are brought into play in offensive or defensive action, such as strength, alertness, concentration, shrewdness, deceit, physical patience and courage, etc. A moment's consideration is sufficient to convince one that the higher ethical qualities are not stimulated and developed in a fight between two men. On certain levels of being individual conflict may be a means of developing a higher type, but not so among beings who have fully attained to the moral level. When the conflict is between groups it stimulates in the members of the group such qualities as group loyalty, the sense of community of interest, the spirit of co-operation and mutual aid. It diverts attention from the conflict of interests within the group and focalizes it upon that which they have in common, and so develops a consciousness of dependence upon one another. At the same time with respect to members of opposing groups it develops all the lower passions. Its effect is, therefore, partly good and partly bad; that is to say, it is good only in so far as it develops the spirit of fraternity and extends the area of harmonious and mutually helpful co-operation. How, then, could the extension of the law of fraternal service over the whole field arrest social progress?

To avoid a possible misunderstanding, it should be observed that the elimination of conflict, in the sense in which the term is here used, would

not at all involve universal agreement in thought. Disagreement and opposition in thinking are a necessary result of personal differentiation and must abound more and more; but when the motive of service manifestly controls the will, contention in the sphere of thought, being uncontaminated by base passion and motived by the desire to promote truth, which is a universal good, is altogether stimulating in its effect upon personal development. When, however, intellectual disagreement degenerates into personal or group conflict, as it has often done—falling like Lucifer from heaven to hell—it has strange power to arouse baser passion and turn the energies which it releases toward destruction. Some incidental or secondary benefits may, indeed, result from it in the way of disturbing the equilibrium of a static society and indirectly setting in motion constructive processes. But such benefits are purchased at high cost.

It is evident that conflict is wasteful. This result is so manifest in international and civil war that the economic spirit makes a more effective protest than any other influence against war; and yet the economic life itself has been the sphere of perpetual conflict which is just as wasteful. It needs no demonstration that a group of men who are working together, each giving himself without reserve to the common good, will accomplish more than the same group when each is working for his own advantage as distinguished

from the common good and consuming much of his time and energy in guarding his private interests against the encroachment of others, or pressing his own interests to the detriment of others. Certainly a thorough application of the law of service would eliminate this waste and consecrate the total energy of society to the advancement of all.

The ethical principle of service as taught by Jesus would, therefore, while affording to the forces and processes of differentiation the largest and freest possible playroom, fully integrate society and utilize in positive and constructive effort all the varified and unequal powers of humanity for the development of the race. Mankind will get well started in the way of progress only when this principle has become the organic law of society, inspiring its ideals and dominating all its activities. Inequality will exist; as concerns personal capacity, it will be a more pronounced fact than it is now; but it will not lead to oppression. The superiority of some will not bar the way to self-realization for others, but will rather open to them the doors of higher possibilities; and the strongest cohesive force in society will be the clasped hands of the strong and the weak. Such a society will be the strongest and most progressive conceivable. Its solidarity will not be like that of primitive society. It will be most highly specialized; but all the highly specialized and unequal powers will be knit together by mutual

helpfulness. It will be infinitely stimulating to personality, and will not purchase the advancement of some at the cost of the degradation of others. For on the moral level of life this inevitably ends in the degradation of all and the weakening of the entire body. The special powers of everyone will be capitalized as a value for all. Every increment of strength by which one elevates himself over his fellows will be an additional strand in the cable by which those whom he has risen above will be lifted upward. It will be the only rational organization of human society.

CHAPTER V

SELF-REALIZATION AND SELF-DENIAL

Every organism normally seeks not only to perpetuate, but to fulfill its life. It seems also to be a general fact that the higher in the scale of being the organism stands, the more pronounced is its desire for self-development and the more the value of life seems to lie in the process of growth. If an organism has only a feeble impulse to realize its potentialities, it is because they are small, or because it is already in the process of dissolution. The desire to be strong and fully developed, to bring into actual exercise all latent capacities, seems to lie in the very nature of organic life and is strongest in man, the highest conscious organism of which we have knowledge. Doubtless the impulse to self-realization is only the vague striving of germinal possibilities beneath the threshold of clear consciousness—the upward pressure of the potential against the door of the actual. Evidently, then, it can be suppressed only by the destruction of life itself.

Now, the ethic of Jesus is sometimes interpreted as directly contradicting and tending to suppress this fundamental impulse of life. Thus Mr. Hobhouse says of Christianity: "The conception of a brotherhood of love based on the

negation of self is demonstrably inadequate to the problem of reorganizing society and intelligently directing human efforts. Even on the personal side it is deficient, for human progress depends upon the growth and perfecting of faculty and therefore requires that provision be made for self-development, which is not selfishness, but builds a better personality on the basis of self-repression." Such writers do not attribute to Jesus the extreme pessimism of the Buddha, but nevertheless understand Him to teach that the way of salvation lies in self-mortification, whereas every form of life, from the lowest to the highest, cries out with an increasingly passionate demand for self-expression. Not self-diminution, but self-enlargement is the law of life; not the throwing of one's self away in a fanatical self-immolation for others—in which, if all men were to engage, the result would be a moral *reductio ad absurdum* on a colossal scale; but a wise and sane striving after the fullest enrichment of one's self—in which, if all should engage, the largest possible sum of social good would be realized.

Is this opposition between the teaching of Jesus and the teaching of nature real? In the first place, some of the most notable sayings of Jesus cannot possibly be squared with this interpretation of His doctrine. He stated His mission in several forms which emphasize different phases of it, but no statement in which He gave expression to it is more significant or striking than this:

"I am come that they might have life, and have it abundantly." Surely there is no self-repression here. Fullness of life—that is the goal toward which life is impelled. The upward organic impulse, becoming ever more intense and definitely conscious as the scale of being is ascended, seems to find its first adequate, clear, fully conscious utterance in the words of the great Teacher as He defines His mission, which thus appears to be to bring to its realization on the level of humanity this universal striving of life for more life. He correlates His work with the central process of nature. In the parables of the talents and the pounds the same lesson is taught from a different point of view. He there emphasizes the duty of the individual through appropriate activity to develop to the utmost his special capacities, which in His view are endowments bestowed by God. According to this view, the moral significance of life lies precisely in the development of one's powers or gifts; and the reward for the performance of this duty consists both in the increase of capacities and the enlargement of the sphere of their use. Surely there is nothing here that is opposed to nature—nothing that has not become a commonplace of science, unless it be the religious conception of personal powers as divinely given; and if one assumes that the scientific and religious interpretations of phenomena are essentially opposed, he has already ceased to be scientific and become metaphysical

and dogmatic. Then he needs to be reminded that the metaphysical dogmatism that denies is not so well validated by far as the theological dogmatism which affirms the religious interpretation of the universe.

But there must be some element in the doctrine of Jesus the misunderstanding of which has led to this erroneous interpretation of Him. For we must remember that it is not the unsympathetic critics alone that have misconceived Him, but many of those who were, we must believe, honestly seeking to follow Him have fallen into a similar mistake, a mistake which in many cases has had most lamentable consequences in their lives. That element is His strong and oft-repeated injunction to self-denial. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." The "cross" is the symbol of a most humiliating and painful death. He Himself suffered physical crucifixion; and as a result both of His teaching and of the manner of His death, the cross has become the symbol of Christian experience. Christian experience, then, it would seem, is the giving of one's self to a painful personal death, a self-immolation. Instead of holding before men the ideal of the personality developed into the highest possible richness and fullness and freedom in all its factors—physical, mental, spiritual—Jesus places an exaggerated and fanatical emphasis upon the spiritual, which leads to the despising of the physical and the

neglecting of the mental, and thus to the distortion of the personality, or at least a one-sided and abnormal development of it. He exalts self-abnegation to the supreme place among the virtues, and stresses humility until it fatally relaxes the springs of personal ambition and arrests personal self-assertion. He praises the virtues of the weak, and pronounces His most comforting beatitudes upon the failures in the struggle for life. This is to turn topsy-turvy the whole order of nature and to put a brake upon the wheel that carries life up the long and painful slope toward perfection. So these critics of the Christian ethic have reasoned. And it must be admitted that there is a real paradox here.

To resolve this apparent contradiction in His teaching it is necessary to find some principle which correlates these phases of His doctrine; and it is not hard to find. He states the principle Himself in language which, while not scientific, can hardly be made more precise in meaning by scientific formulation—"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it; for what is a man advantaged if he gain the whole world and lose himself, or be a castaway?" "He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." "Give and it shall be given unto you; good measure pressed down and shaken together and running over shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure

that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." In different forms and applications this paradox appears throughout His teaching. He rings the changes upon it. It is manifest that it is a central principle of His thought. A more pretentious scientific formulation than He gives it would be: Self-realization comes by self-sacrifice for others. Is this true? Can it be scientifically validated? Is it in accord with human experience? Let us see.

For a being who has attained the moral level of existence, progress in the unfolding of the personality must consist in developing and bringing all the energies of his nature into more perfect unity and co-operation under the highest ethical law which he knows; or, what amounts to the same thing, toward the highest end which he can conceive. This proposition does not seem to need any demonstration. What, then, is the highest end a man can set for himself? Is it the glory of God, according to the old creed, or, as it would most likely be now stated, the fulfillment of the will of God in his life? We venture to say that this means concretely that his efforts must be directed either to his own personal development to the maximum or to the bringing of other human personalities to the realization of their greatest possible strength and joy. Or is it some superpersonal, universal end—the advancement of the universe toward the attainment of some distant

goal of perfection? This again will resolve itself concretely into working for the advancement either of one's self or of others in the higher possibilities of human nature.

The question then is, should a man find his supreme end in himself or in others? It is obvious that the chief moral problem of life grows out of this antithesis of two ends, each of which claims the devotion of one's energies. They seem to be antithetical in thought and often inconsistent in practice; and one's ethical theory, as well as one's moral conduct, will be fundamentally determined by the manner in which he correlates these ends. The ethic of Jesus is chiefly distinguished from others by his peculiar way of correlating them. In his thought their opposition is unreal, illusory. They are always really identical, or at least consistent with one another. If one in the pursuit of his own interests finds himself running counter to the interests of others, he may be sure that something is wrong either in his moral principle or in its application. One cannot be truly advancing his own personal development if he is at the same time hindering the personal advancement of another. More than this, he cannot be bringing himself up toward the fullness of life if he is neglecting to do anything in his power to bring others up toward the fullness of life. The whole problem of growing out of the opposition of these

ends is thrust aside as having its roots in a misconception of the nature of the self or in the method of self-realization.

Can this view of Jesus be scientifically validated? The basic truth of modern sociology is that the individual is a function of the group. This means that the group is not simply an addition or spatial aggregation of individuals, but is, so to speak, a multiplication of the individuals into one another. The individual realizes himself in and through group-relations. If an individual is added to a group he does not simply "make one more." The whole situation is changed by his coming into it. As soon as the new-comer enters and begins to take his part in its life his influence reacts upon all the individuals composing it, modifying their dispositions, activities and reactions upon one another. If he is a weak personality and the group is a large or a highly organized one, his modifying influence will probably be small, though it will be real. Roughly it may be said that his modifying influence will be conditioned, first, by the ratio of his personal force to the volume and organization of the collective life; and, second, by the character of the specific rôle which he plays in it. On the other hand, it is also true that he will be modified in his disposition and activity by the reaction of all the others upon him. The bringing of a new individual into a group subtly changes the life of all

within it, including his own. If this sociological principle is true—and the investigation of social facts confirms it more and more strongly—the corresponding ethical principle must be that each man is at one and the same time an end in himself and a means to personal ends outside himself. In other words, his life must be considered as an end to himself at the same time that it is working as a means in other lives. If, when his action has reference to himself as an end, he injures any interest of those associated with him, he will also injure his own interests, since he is an integral part of the group and is influenced by all that influences the other members of it.

But it may be objected that this argument assumes an identity of or a parallelism between the interests of each individual and the interests of the group which does not in fact exist. Does not the collective interest sometimes require the over-riding of the interests of individuals? Take the extreme case of war, for instance. If the individual is required to give up his life for the success of his country, is there not the most direct and uncompromising conflict between the individual and collective interests? When the property of the individual is taken against his will and devoted to public uses, where then is the identity or parallelism of interests? It must be confessed that it is not always easy in concrete cases to perceive it, and is especially difficult for

the person in question; but if we look a little deeper we shall find that the conflict is not as obvious as it at first appears.

In the first place, we must distinguish between real and mistaken interests, both individual and collective. You may desire or prize something very much which is a real injury to you. It is an "interest," in the technical sense of the word, in the fact that it is desired or prized; but actually it may be of no advantage to you at all. What is here meant by a real interest is that which promotes self-realization, the development of the personality in the direction of its maximum richness and power; and by a mistaken or unreal interest is meant that which, though it may afford satisfaction of some kind, hinders the upward and outward expansion of the personality; and it is obvious that a similar distinction may exist between the interests of a community.

Now, limiting our consideration to advantages, actually valid interests, let us consider the extreme case in which the individual is required to offer his life for the common welfare. Suppose that he declines; or, to be concrete, suppose that he deserts and succeeds in making his escape. He keeps his physical life; but what is the effect upon his personality? Has his life not depreciated in value, almost to the zero point? How much is the life of a cowardly deserter worth? Let any man of normal moral constitution deliberately choose between saving his life by desertion and

loyally yielding it up as a sacrifice in defence of the vital interests of his country. Our very instincts tell us that our true interests are realized in the latter way. If this is true in regard to the extreme case, may we not assume that it would be true in all other cases of apparent conflict? The individual is linked up with the group so intimately, so inextricably, that if you should succeed in disentangling the single thread of his life from the complicated web of group-relations you would strip it of all significance, all content, all value. He cannot have any real interest that is even independent of the general interest, much less opposed to it.

If now we turn from the consideration of the relation of the individual to the total or collective interest, and think of the direct relations of individuals to one another, the truth of our contention is just as apparent. Can one individual advance his own real interest by violating the real interests of another? Again, let an extreme case be examined. Two men meet in deadly conflict; one must die at the hands of the other. The party attacked slays the other in self-defence, or the attacking party murders the other. Is there not here an absolute opposition of interests? In the case where homicide is committed in self-defence, the aggressor loses his life. But suppose that instead of losing his life he had succeeded in taking the other man's. Would he have conserved or promoted any real interest of his own?

Certainly not. The murderer injures himself more than he does his victim. But if the party attacked kills in self-defence, does he not inflict an injury on another in the very act of taking care of his own interests? Superficially it seems so; but was not the supreme injury inflicted upon the would-be murderer by himself when in the spirit of murder he sought the life of another? Had he not destroyed his own life in so far as its essential worth was concerned? To say the least, then, it is only in a qualified sense that the man who is acting in defence of his own life really violates the interest of his murderous assailant in slaying him. On the other hand, it is also true that he has conserved his own real interest only in a qualified sense; for however justifiable his act may be, his life is inevitably clouded by it. It is even a question with many sensitive consciences whether they would, if called upon to choose deliberately between the alternatives, prefer to die at the hands of an assailant or to take the assailant's life. There is no real conflict of interests that justifies the existence of this hostile relationship; and when it arises, it is impossible to conserve without qualifications the interest of either party. Of course, there is danger in the analysis of such moral situations of falling into vain casuistry, a sort of moral hair-splitting; but it is none the less true that a close study of the ultimate moral meaning of the relations and reactions between individuals shows that there is

no real opposition of interests. Whoever injures another will in the long run be found to have injured himself quite as seriously, or perhaps far more so.

The solution of the problem of conflicting interests will be clearer when considered in connection with the principle stated in a previous paragraph. It was said there that progress in the development of personality consists in bringing all the energies of one's life into more perfect harmony and co-operation toward the realization of the highest end of his being. There is a hierarchy of interests in every man's life. The lower interests are real only in so far as they contribute to the promotion of the interests that stand in the scale above them. To a being of spiritual capacity, the sensuous satisfactions are not interests, except as they form the basis of or contribute toward the realization of his nobler possibilities. Food and shelter and clothing, all physical comforts, personal gratifications of every sort, even intellectual attainments and pleasures, should relate themselves to the development of the life in its highest ranges. If these subordinate interests are pursued in a way to hinder the expansion of the life on higher levels they become injurious. They cease to be real interests. When the individual is developed up to the point of realizing the higher values, those higher values become regnant. They take up into themselves all the lower values. Every conflict of interests

is really a conflict between a subordinate and a superior interest of the individual in question; or between a secondary interest of the individual and a primary interest of the group; or between a primary interest of the individual and a secondary interest of the group; or between a primary interest of one individual and a secondary interest of another. And when any of these situations arise the secondary interest is no longer a true, but a mistaken one.

Two men are engaged in a trade. Each of them is seeking to gain an advantage over the other. Are their interests in conflict? If attention be fixed upon immediate material gain, it may be so; because the material gain is then considered as a good in itself. It is viewed out of its relation to the higher interest, and when so viewed there may be an opposition between the interests of the two men. But, if instead of fixing attention upon this relative interest of gain we fix it upon the highest values, it is clear that the opposition disappears. The man who cheats another has injured himself in an interest of his life which is far more vital than material gain. His love of gain has arrested the upward development of his personality; he has sacrificed his higher to his lower interests, and the lower has ceased in the very act to be an interest at all. The only kind of trade that can be morally justified is that in which both parties are benefitted, or in which one is benefitted and the other

is at least not injured; and the same may be said of every transaction between men. The more clearly one grasps the moral implication of the sociological principle that every individual is a function of the group of which he is a member, the clearer will it become that there is no real opposition between the real interests of men. If the conflict actually occurs, it is because one or both of the conflicting interests is mistaken and false.

The failure to consider the specific and partial interests in their relation to the general hierarchy of interests is apt to lead to confusion in ethical thought. One of our most brilliant sociologists has declared: "It is demonstrably untrue that we thrive only when the group thrives; that so entangled are we in the network of relations we cannot fare well when the social body fares ill; that labour for the corporate welfare pays the best dividends. . . . The lot of the individual is sufficiently apart from the group for him to snatch an ill-gotten gain for himself just as a man may profitably cheat his government even though he raises his taxes thereby." This is, of course, true if one is thinking of specific material interests apart from their relations and significance within the total hierarchy of one's interests. It amounts to nothing more than the affirmation of the fact, which nobody can deny, that men often do anti-social deeds without being punished by civil law and perhaps without being very pain-

fully lashed by their own consciences; but no one surely would maintain that the individual is not injured by those acts in the total interest of his life. If men can do wrong deeds without injuring vital interests of their own, the very foundation of the moral sanctions is destroyed.

An interesting and extremely important question arises in this connection. Does this ethical principle hold not only as between individuals within a group and as between individuals and the group, but also as between groups themselves? Can group conflict be ethically justified? If there is danger of falling into a sort of casuistical hair-splitting in considering the simple relations which have been under discussion, it is much greater in dealing with this problem; for the collective unities involved cannot be considered as single entities, but as bearers of all the individual interests of their constituents. But, avoiding over-refinement of analysis, it seems possible to show that the principle is valid in the relations between bodies of men. If we contemplate the groups below the human level, it appears evident that among them progress has come chiefly by conflict. Wild animal species war against one another; the stronger prevails and annihilates or, more frequently, eats up the weaker. The law of the survival of the fittest in its crudest form prevails—the fittest under such conditions meaning those most able to take care of themselves in the bloody war. And progress comes along that

gory path. Sociologists tell us that in the early ages of the world it was customary among men also for the conquerors to exterminate the conquered; and this practice is attributed, in part at least, to the limited food supply. Men had not attained to a sufficient mastery over nature to know how to increase the natural productivity of the earth, and hence the clans and tribes were forced into a deadly struggle for natural fruits. Later, when they had learned better how to direct natural forces so as to increase the food supply, the institution of slavery grew up as a substitute for the practice of extermination. With improvement in their economic technique they began to perceive, however dimly, that their interests were not utterly opposed; that a form of adjustment, involving in some measure the principle of community of interest, was both possible and desirable. They saved their captives alive instead of putting them to death, and subjected them to slavery. This was a great step forward—one of the most notable stages of progress. To spare the life of the conquered was found advantageous to the triumphant group.

It was due only to ignorance that their interests had appeared absolutely irreconcilable. First, it was their economic ignorance. If they had only known how to develop the resources of nature, the scarcity of food, so far from bringing them into absolute conflict, would only have tended to make apparent the advantages of co-operation

and the real parallelism of their interests. In the second place, it was their ignorance of the fact that social life is enriched by the contact and interaction of different racial and cultural types. Slavery, after it had been instituted, was found to have the advantage that, besides substituting a form of social adjustment for extermination, it brought variant human types into living relations with one another, and so resulted in the general enrichment of social life. It was in fact a recognition, though doubtless not a fully conscious recognition, of a community of interests. And yet there is every reason to believe that, although the economic motive was the dominant one, moral considerations were not wholly absent. It is extremely probable that in saving captives alive instead of putting them to death, an ethical motive was present. It was the first germination of international morality.

Since that time inter-group morality has continued to develop and the community of interests between groups has become increasingly conscious. It has manifested itself in the abatement of the rigours of war. The conflict between nations has become more and more humane. By slow degrees warring peoples have come to respect, in increasing measure, one another's interests. I do not mean to say that this increasing humanization of war has been steady, but, on the whole, such has been the trend. At first it was not perceived that extermination was in the interest

neither of the conquerors nor the conquered; and slowly, oh, so slowly, step by step, men have come to question more and more—while the long ages resounded with the monotonous clash of arms, with the groans of dying men and the shrieks of violated women and the piteous cries of little children—whether it was not all an awful, tragical blunder! Little by little the cruel inhumanities of war have been abated; and now the awakened conscience of the modern world confidently challenges the wisdom and righteousness of the whole horrible practice. We are beginning to see that it is unjustifiable because not based on a real antagonism of interests. As the life of man has grown upward, group conflicts have been softened; the more enlightened the human conscience becomes, the more reprehensible does the warlike clash appear. When human life comes thoroughly under the control of reason, the futility and absurdity of war will become so manifest that no sane man will be found to raise his voice in its favour.

Social progress has coincided with the growing perception of the community of interests as between bodies of men as well as between individuals. In maintaining this contention it is not necessary at all to deny that in some ways group conflict has promoted social progress; but in what sense is that true? Has it not served a good purpose chiefly, if not exclusively, because it has taught men the value of co-operation? It has

been a hard school in which men have learned through bitter and wasteful experience the supremely important lesson that their interests *do not really conflict.* It has compelled men to think more deeply upon those situations in which their interests seemed to be irreconcilable. And under that stress they have come to see ever more clearly how those interests can be so adjusted as not only to be conserved, but developed to ever higher values. Given the conditions, subjective and objective, in which mankind began its career in the world, and conflict was unavoidable; but age-long experience in conflict has taught men that their interests can be conserved and promoted only in conjunction with the interests of their fellow-men.

The same conclusion is reached if we approach the question from the direction of social psychology. There is space for only a brief consideration of the matter from this point of view. The personality or the self is organized in and through experience. By experience we mean the reactions of the human being upon his environment. In the organization of personality through experience two processes go on. First, increasing individualization. At the beginning no two human organisms are exactly alike. They differ in their physiology. These differences constitute the physical bases of individuality. And then the environment of no two persons is exactly alike. Hence, as the biological organism is peculiar in some respects and the environment is peculiar in

some respects, the experience must be peculiar; and the personality which is organized in this experience will be peculiar; and as it is more and more highly organized through a continuing series of experiences, each of which is in some respects unlike those of any other person, it will become more and more clearly and definitely differentiated from all others. But, on the other hand, these organisms are at the start alike in general outline of organization, notwithstanding their differences. Their differences consist in the singular way in which the biological elements and processes are correlated in them. Moreover, the environments of individuals, while they differ in many particulars, are also in their general outlines similar; so that the experiences of different human beings—while each is unique—are also much alike. Thus the chief differential factor in these various personalities is the peculiar correlation in each of elements which are specifically different yet generically alike. The difference lies more in the organization of the elements than in the elements themselves.

The second process which goes on step by step with the preceding is the development of those mental processes by which one is able to represent to himself the experiences of others. The increasing number of mental images is organized into systems of ideas; and along with this higher intellectual organization the life of feeling becomes more refined and varied. By means of this

more highly developed mental life we can enter into the experiences of others and interpret them. More properly speaking, we translate the experiences of others into our own experience in so far as those experiences are similar to our own. We suffer and enjoy with others; we sympathize. Unless this normal process is arrested and crystallization takes place on a lower level, the point will be reached, either somewhat suddenly in a crisis or by gradual transition, where it is quite impossible to be happy while others who are within the circle of one's knowledge are unhappy. At the same time, by reason of this development the circle of one's knowledge and sympathy is continually broadening. It embraces first the circle of persons with whom we stand in the most immediate relation and continually expands to include wider circles; and at the same time that the range of sympathy is extending, its intensity is deepening. In this way it comes to pass that every great personality finds his happiness indissolubly linked up with the happiness of a vast number of his fellow-beings. His happiness rises or falls with theirs. We may formulate it as a sort of law, thus: Self-development and a consciousness of the community of one's interests with others proceed together. They are only different phases of the same general process.

The actual conflicts between persons are often supposed to be the necessary result of the individualizing process described above. As a man

becomes more individualized he is supposed to insist upon pursuing his own ends without let or hindrance by other persons. But if he thus insists, not only on living his own life in his own way for his own ends, but on doing it in a way inconsistent with the interests of others, that excessive egoism must hinder the expansion of the sympathetic side of his nature. And this must have a hurtful effect upon the development of the mental processes, both intellectual and emotional, in which sympathy has its origin. It thus arrests the upward development of the personality and at the same time the process of individualization. As a matter of fact, the selfish person is either one whose mental functions have not yet been organized into a unity and whose inner life is therefore archaic, or one whose moral life has been organized into a unity around some lower principle—such, for instance, as sensuous pleasure or the love of money—and who therefore should properly be considered as a simple case of arrested development or as a pervert. In this way he may be in some sense individualized, though as a matter of fact such persons belong to well-defined types, all whose specimens are, as a rule, monotonously similar.

From whatever direction, therefore, we approach the problem scientifically, the principle of Jesus seems to be confirmed. Human interests are not really inconsistent one with the other. The interest of all is the interest of each; and

moral progress, individual and collective, lies exactly in the progressive conscious realization of this community of interests. To the developed moral individuality it is impossible to find satisfaction in any form of activity, or any form of possession or of achievement which hurts the interests of others; and that is because their interests, properly understood, are coincident with his own. He finds his highest satisfaction rather in the promotion of the interest of others, because their well-being *is his* interest. The self, the fulfillment of which constitutes his highest end, has made the interest of others central. Herein lies the explanation of the paradox of Jesus—self-realization by self-sacrifice. By self-sacrifice, therefore, is not meant self-mortification or self-destruction, but the putting forth of the energies of self into other lives and finding self-realization in so doing.

Much space has been given to this somewhat technical and dry discussion of the scientific implications of this great doctrine, because it has become quite the fashion in certain circles to treat the ethic of Jesus as that of a somewhat naïve and unsophisticated person, as therefore unsuited to this complex and scientific life which we live to-day, and to demand a new ethic based upon the findings of the great sciences of Sociology and Psychology. And that issue must be met by those who believe that these sciences, instead of giving birth to a new and better morality, will rather

bring an additional confirmation of and a clearer insight into the teaching of Jesus about human relations. What is needed to-day is not the relegation of that teaching to a past age, but the study of its deeper implication and the practice of it in its broader applications. That past age did not exhaust its meaning; the social experience of the modern world was needed in order to discover a richer content of meaning in it than the past had even suspected.

We are now in a position to estimate properly the bearing of the ethical doctrine of Jesus upon the question of personal ambition. Does He discourage it? He certainly does not. By implication, He stamps it with approval. He only gives it a direction which renders it wholly beneficial in its social effects. "If any man would be great among you, let him be your servant." Manifestly this is not a harsh, disciplinary measure of repression intended to root out the natural desire of any capable person to be great. On the contrary, it justifies this natural desire and points out the way by which it can be gratified so as to promote the interests of all. Slowly but surely the enlightened conscience is coming to accept His method as the only truly practicable one.

As the population becomes more dense and men are more closely crowded together; as social relations become more numerous and highly organized, and men become more interdependent, it is evident that the prizes of

ambitious strength become more alluring while the social dangers of selfish ambition become greater. It becomes more apparent, therefore, that the method of satisfying ambition described by Jesus is the only safe one. Hence it is that in certain spheres it has come to be clearly recognized as a fundamental principle that the great man must be a public servant. There is a growing demand that in all spheres men shall gratify their ambition by serving the people. The real issue which is at the heart of the social agitations of the present day is that this principle shall actually prevail in our political and economic life. There are not wanting multitudes of short-sighted people who insist that the application of this principle to economic activities would cut the tap-root of personal ambition and slow down the whole process of economic production. It is hard to be patient in combating such a view. Those who hold it are, no doubt, honest; but it is difficult to see how it is possible seriously to maintain it. Experience demonstrates that in those spheres of life where the law of service has been partially applied it has not had such disastrous effects. Does it repress or discourage the ambitions of men in political life to insist that aldermen, mayors, governours, congressmen, presidents should really be public servants and thus gratify their personal ambitions? If so, it is discouraging only to those who ought to be eliminated from public life for the public good. Re-

cent history has exhibited a few examples of the salutary effect which it has had.

But when it is suggested that the same principle should apply to the vast commercial and industrial activities of our time, the proposition is received by many men with ridicule or indignation; as if there were something in the very nature of economic activity which necessitates and consecrates greed; as if it were possible for human nature to walk upright in every other department of life, but only possible for it to crawl upon its belly in that one. But the change is coming. It must come. It is possible for men to find in economic service rather than in gain the satisfaction of their personal ambitions. It is only necessary that the atmospheric change in the ideals of men, which is already beginning to be felt, shall sweep over that great section of life as over every other, and then men of exceptional business capacity will feel the "inward call" to serve the world with that capacity, and find in so doing a satisfaction of personal ambition which will have in it no moral sting.

PART II

APPLICATION OF PRINCIPLES

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CHAPTER I

WEALTH—CERTAIN PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

This is not a treatise on economics, and hence it is not necessary to enter into any fine-spun distinctions. But it is well to have some understanding as to what certain words mean in the discussion. The first of these is "wealth." In this discussion it means simply material things which are available as a means of satisfying human wants. A more extended and critical definition for present purposes would doubtless be more confusing than illuminating. Some definite significance should also be attached to the terms "rich" and "poor" and "riches" and "poverty." Their meaning is relative; each gets its meaning from contrast with its opposite, in relation to the total wealth of society. In general we mean by a "rich man" one who has a store of accumulated wealth more than sufficient to supply all personal or family needs according to the standard of living in his community, and enough to afford a reasonable guarantee that all such needs will continue to be abundantly satisfied. Of course, no such guarantee can be absolute. There is always the possibility of a reversal of fortune that will bring want; but there are some, and in modern society an increasing number, to whom this pos-

sibility is a very remote one. "Poverty" means not merely the absence of an abundance, but the dependence upon one's daily labour for the means of life. In modern technical usage it is usually applied only to a state of destitution. Of course, there are many gradations of riches and poverty. In the use of the words we usually have in mind those who are at or near the extremes of the scale.

Before directing attention to the utterances of Jesus concerning wealth, it is well to give attention to certain general considerations in the light of which His words should be interpreted. First among these are the economic conditions in the midst of which He lived. Against this general background it will be easier to understand His words, which were called forth by specific situations. In no other way can we arrive at some of the larger implications of His sayings. He nowhere systematized His conceptions of wealth and its right uses; and we can do so only by continual reference from the particular cases with which He dealt to the general conditions which coloured all His thinking.

The total wealth of the society in which he lived was far less than that of the society in which we live. Professor Patten tells us that we must distinguish between a condition of "social deficit," in which there is hardly sufficient wealth, if properly distributed, to maintain all the population in a tolerable degree of comfort; and a con-

dition of "social plenty," in which the total wealth is sufficient to maintain all in decency and afford to all a chance to share in the higher values of life, though this desirable end may, of course, be defeated, even in a state of abundance, by inequitable distribution. Corresponding to the condition of social deficit there is a "pain economy." Life for the great masses of the people is hard and bare and shadowed by continual want or the danger of starvation. Suffering and hardship abound, and are so common that the finer sensibilities of men have but little opportunity to develop. Men are less humane, and pity is rare. Cruelty, or what seems cruelty to those who live under different social conditions, is often practiced and does not so promptly or so generally call forth condemnation. On the other hand, a condition of plenty introduces a "pleasure economy." Life becomes easier; comforts multiply and are brought within the reach of an ever larger proportion of the people. Men become less accustomed to hardship, want and pain, of the physical kind at least. Under these milder conditions of life the sensibilities become refined. Men shrink from suffering; the sight of suffering in others becomes more intolerable, and the unnecessary infliction of pain awakens the deepest resentment. The changed economic conditions react upon the whole mental and moral life and effect a profound transformation of all human ideals.

The same author tells us that "all civilizations before the nineteenth century, like the primitive societies of the Western world to-day and the backward despotisms of the East, were realms of pain and deficit." The economic conditions under which Jesus lived are well described by the phrase "social deficit." Poverty abounded. The masses of the people lived near to the border line of want, and many of them beyond it. This was not due to the sterility of the land. There is good evidence that the country was for the most part fertile, decidedly more so than it is now. The population was dense. It has been estimated that upon the eleven thousand square miles of Palestine between three and five million people lived. That would seriously tax the capacity of the soil under any conditions; but it was well cultivated and was not incapable of supporting such a population in some degree of modest comfort, according to the standards of living which prevailed in that age.

Moreover, while commerce and industry were not nearly so highly developed as they are in modern Western countries, manufactures were considerable and trade was brisk. The great poverty of the people could not be charged primarily to sloth, nor to the infertility of the land, nor to the backwardness of economic development, though that development was not such as could, under any conditions, have produced affluence. The most potent cause of the general

poverty was not deficiency of production, though according to the standards of living in modern Western countries it was sufficiently meager; but was general social injustice. The distribution of wealth was even more unrighteous than in modern society. Here and there were men who by fair means or foul—and usually by the latter—accumulated great fortunes and lived in affluence, standing like richly verdured oases in the midst of a desert of want. The weak were the almost helpless victims of the strong. They were practically defenceless. They could be easily despoiled of their few possessions; and there was no authority which was interested in preventing their spoilation. The country was wretchedly governed. Order was not well preserved. Robbery was frequent, and violence was restrained with a slack hand. It was only the man who was able to police his own property, so to speak, who could be sure of keeping it. But if the government was weak in protection, it was strong in taxation. The people were frightfully overtaxed. It was the custom to farm out the taxes, and the tax-collectors were not paid by the government. They had to add their compensation to the tax-levy and collect the two together. Only in a society of perfect men could this method be pursued without the perpetration of injustice; and the tax-gatherers of that day were far from being perfect. They practiced a legal form of robbery; and, while all classes suffered at their hands, it was practically

easier for them to fatten upon people of small means than upon the rich and powerful, who could in some measure defend themselves.

To complete this hasty sketch of the economic status of the people, it should be added that employment was more irregular and insecure than in our time. The vast extension and highly complex specialization of industry in the modern world may have their incidental disadvantages; but industrial conditions are far more stable and subject to fewer and less serious interruptions than they were in the ancient world. The workers, therefore, were then more uncertain as to the continuity of their means of earning a living, and when the doors of opportunity to work were closed there were practically no agencies, organized or unorganized, to come to their relief. The insecurity of employment is one of the most distressing aspects of the modern industrial situation; but there is no good reason to doubt that it was worse in the Judea and Galilee of two thousand years ago.

There is small wonder, then, that misery was widespread. We can hardly imagine what a terrible reality the conditions gave to the meaning of the words Jesus taught His disciples to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread." These words are often repeated now by persons who have no proper realization of their significance. Living in a stable social order, surrounded by accumulations of capital for the protection of which

mighty governments are primarily pledged, the menace of real want is so far removed from the modern well-to-do man that it hardly casts a faint shadow upon his dreams; and even the poorest are sensible of the fact that the kindness of friends, the aid of benevolent associations, and, in the last resort, the abundant strength of the whole community usually stand between them and utter want. But it was different with those to whom Jesus uttered these words. Many of them were ill-fed; few of them felt themselves to be safely fortified against grim destitution; life was full of anxiety. They were deeply sensible of the general wretchedness and of the injustice that was so glaringly manifest on all sides. But whither should they turn?

It is safe to say that the most conscientious people were, as a rule, not among the most prosperous. Those who accumulated great wealth and secured the high positions in social life under such conditions were usually not encumbered with inconvenient scruples. The "survival of the fittest" does not mean the ascendency of the morally best, except in an approximately perfect social order. It simply means that those who are adapted to a certain environment will flourish in it. If the environment is a morally bad one, it is not the morally good who will the most easily flourish in it. In the particular social environment we are discussing Jesus did not "survive;" and the most conscientious were generally found amongst the

lowly. It would be extreme, of course, to say that among the prosperous and highly placed there were none who were morally worthy. Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, for instance, seem to have been men of good character; and others might be mentioned; but even in their cases the evidence shows that they found it prudent not to follow too openly their better impulses. A given social environment always "selects" and brings into positions of power and leadership persons of a corresponding type; and that situation tended to promote persons of a selfish and unscrupulous character. Many of the best people were among the least fortunate. This fact was especially confusing and distressing to the conscience at that time. The ancient belief which that generation had inherited was that the good were prosperous, and *vice-versa*. In the more primitive conditions of society this was usually the case; but the social conditions of that ancient time in which this belief arose had passed and it was no longer true, but rather the reverse. The belief, however, lingered and added to the mental distress which afflicted the conscientious poor. Unrest, moral confusion and uncertainty, complaint, recrimination, violence, anxiety were rife; and, while much of the suffering was dumb, the general unhappiness of the times did not fail to find expression. We are told that "an excursion through the literature of the times is like passing through Dante's Inferno, except that nowhere,

as in the great Italian, appears any trace of that divine pity which can always be recognized even in uncompromising justice."

When Jesus came with His startling message into the midst of a society like that, the population soon divided in their attitude toward Him, and the line of cleavage might easily have been foreseen. With the announcement of the Kingdom of Heaven, John the Baptist prepared the way for Him and brought the social significance of His mission into the foreground. Jesus took up the great phrase and immediately gave it a meaning that arrested the attention of all classes. He began at once to make it appear that the Kingdom of God meant loving righteousness. How sweetly the words fell on the ears of the multitude who were ground down under social injustice! And they had an ominous sound in the ears of those who were the beneficiaries of that injustice. But righteousness might have different meanings. The Pharisees prated of righteousness; but it did not disturb the complacency of those who sat in high places and rested their feet upon the people's necks, since the Pharisees themselves were among that number; for it was a righteousness of formal religion—the only sort of religion that can live in peace with social injustice. But it soon became apparent that Jesus meant by the words not a mere seeking of divine favour through empty ceremonies, and not a merely negative thing like the non-entrenchment on an-

other's rights, but a positive virtue, *the practice of love between man and man.* This conception of righteousness is characteristic of the thought of Jesus and is of capital importance in His teaching. As soon as this innovation of Jesus became apparent the powerful classes began to consolidate against Him, while the hungry and suffering multitudes rallied to Him in great throngs that hung eagerly upon His words. His broad and intense sympathy cast a spell upon their hearts. They dimly perceived in his utterances the promise of a new order of things in which all their wrongs would be righted. They felt, or thought they felt, the ground-swell of a social revolution, and before their dazzled eyes there opened a new era of plenty and security and peace.

Usually those who have succeeded in a given social order resent "radical criticism" of that order, while those who have failed or who have not prospered lend willing ears to suggestions of change; and we should not be swift to attribute base motives in either case; at least, we should remember that the interests of men inevitably colour their honest opinions. At any rate, it is clear that a feeling of the social import of the message of Jesus was one of the potent causes that determined the alignment of the people with respect to Him. The Pharisees were impelled by religious considerations; but their religion was an integral part of the social order and was closely identified with their social interests; so

that it was not the religious motive pure and simple that determined their attitude. Their religion was more to them than an honest conviction or even a blind prejudice. They had worked out an elaborate exposition of the law, especially of those parts of it which pertained to gifts, until the point was reached where none could observe it fully according to their interpretation except those who were well-to-do and had considerable leisure. As "the virtuosos of Jewish piety" they kept the law which they elaborated, even in its minutiæ, and must therefore have been prosperous; but their insistence upon ceremonialism pushed into the background the ethical elements of the law, which therefore rested lightly on their consciences. Their love of the honour of men, their materialism, their eager desire to be punctilious in legal observance combined to make them covetous, while their identification of righteousness with ceremonial legalism removed the restraint of conscience from their lust for wealth. They were among the most heartless oppressors of the poor. Religious and economic values were closely connected in their minds. They were among the most notable beneficiaries of the existing social order. "A new order must arise on new foundations, if once the religious sanction of social relations came to an end. This the Pharisees dimly perceived."

When a religion comes to be formalized, despiritualized, divested of its idealism, adjusted to

the social situation and bound up with other social interests in a defensive alliance, it forms one of the most effective forces of obstruction known in human experience. Its officials instinctively resist innovating tendencies, economic and political, as well as religious, because a radical change in any part of the general system renders insecure their own prestige and power. It is true that the Pharisees had no love for the political power that governed Palestine. It was foreign and was indifferent to their religious doctrines and practices. But they had effected a *modus vivendi* with it and were willing to tolerate it so long as it left undisturbed the general organization of life and their privileged position therein. They fought Jesus, not only because He attacked the current religious ideals and practices, but because they sensed in His teaching a tendency toward general social reconstruction; and, in their final and successful effort to accomplish His death, they put forward a gross falsification of His social teaching as a means of incriminating Him in the eyes of the political authority. They represented Him as seeking to throw off the Roman yoke, which they must have known, or certainly should have known, to be false; and in which, if He had succeeded, they would have heartily acquiesced, if His plan had been to strengthen or leave undisturbed the religious-economic system. But to avert a menace to that they were quite willing to swallow their national

pride and appeal for assistance to their foreign political master.

The Sadducees represented the latitudinarian tendency in religion. They were open to foreign influence and inclined to public life. Their consciences were not greatly troubled by either the ceremonial scruples of the Pharisees or the ethical precepts of the law. They were "men of the world," the product of the positive reaction of the Greek and Roman civilizations upon the Jewish people. At this time they were less influential than the Pharisees, whom they hated, but were no less ambitious and grasping and were generally prosperous. While perhaps not so active in their opposition to Jesus as the Pharisees—possibly because the Pharisees were so active—they nevertheless were impelled by their social instincts to join with them against Him.

Thus those whose interests were bound up with the existing social system stood aloof from and united against the great Innovator. On the other hand, the masses of the people, who had little stake in things as they were and who were deeply sensible of the reign of injustice, found in Him their rallying point; and their enthusiasm was for a time so great as to intimidate His powerful opponents, who did not strike Him down sooner because they feared that to do so would precipitate a revolution rather than avert one.

But it was not long before it became evident

that the radical party did not fully understand Him and began to waver in their attachment to Him. Most of them were thinking of external and superficial changes. They were radical, but Jesus was more radical still. His diagnosis of the situation was far more penetrating and thorough than theirs. Doubtless all those who followed Him were not drawn by the same motives. Some of them thought that His purpose was to cast out the Roman; others thought His aim was economic rather than political; others seem to have been attached to Him by the mighty spiritual magnetism of His personality, without any definite conception of what He proposed; others saw, though saw only dimly and brokenly, through the medium of their prejudices and prepossessions, something of the spiritual significance of His movement.

For His purpose and program were primarily and distinctively spiritual. He came to set men right with God and, as a necessary part of that process, to set them right with one another. His purpose was religious, but religious not in any narrow or technical sense. His plan was cosmic rather than terrestrial; but if the cosmic or universal aspect of His mission may be contrasted with an exclusively terrestrial conception of it, it should also be distinguished from a merely "other-worldly" one. He was interested in man as man, in the essential humanity of men; but He was for that very reason interested in men

as divided into races and classes; as rich and poor, as respectable and despised; as exploiters and exploited. For the abstract man does not exist. Humanity, unshaped by the conditions of life, is a figment of the philosophical imagination. His aim was purely spiritual; but the actual conditions under which men live and the actual relations which they sustain to one another profoundly affect their spiritual lives. It is superficial in the extreme to overlook this fact, and Jesus was not guilty of it. His profound insight into human nature and experience saved Him from the mistake, which has so often vitiated religious thought and practice, of treating the religious life as distinct and separable from the total life of men. He was no teacher of economics, but He was profoundly interested in questions of poverty and wealth because—but only because—the economic conditions of men react so powerfully upon their spiritual lives. One of the most significant facts in the life of our time is the growing appreciation of the spiritual significance of political and economic conditions. On the one hand, they arise out of and express the spiritual—or unspiritual—attitudes of men; and, on the other, determine these attitudes. Any effort to deal with men spiritually without any reference to their social status and economic condition is shortsighted and inevitably proves in large measure abortive. It will surely end in a partial, non-vital, technical conception of religion. An

effective spiritual program must take into consideration the whole man in his concrete situation and relations and seek to build him into a system of life which includes and spiritualizes all human relationships. Such was the program of Jesus. There was in His thought no impassable gulf between ethics and religion. He lifted ethics into the sphere of religion. Economic and political relations were not, in His thought, foreign to religion. The curse of religion in His day was that it had been specialized into a detached department of life; and it has been the curse of organized religion in our time. One of His most notable services to the world was to perceive and insist upon the unity of a man's life and to teach religion as a principle that should penetrate and control it all.

Now, while it is true that the crowds which followed Him understood Him but partially and vaguely, and, when the final test came, fell away because they did not fully grasp His purpose, it is also true that the conditions of their life rendered them as a class far more susceptible to His influence than the rich and powerful and contented classes, who, with a few notable exceptions, repelled Him from the beginning. Among the former He found His most important and most numerous adherents. The chosen twelve, though some of them certainly did not belong to "the property-less proletariat" of the times, were assuredly not among the rich and influential citi-

zens; and the masses of those who then and later were brought to a more permanent and intelligent discipleship were drawn from the lower-middle and poorer classes of the population. Their social situation had prepared them as good soil for the seed of the Kingdom and made them accessible to His spiritual conception of life. Their hearts were more sensitive, their minds more open. They had fewer prejudices in the way, and they had less in the shape of personal interests to surrender than the rich and powerful; and hence it was much less difficult to bring them to perceive, appreciate and embrace the larger spiritual thought and program of Jesus.

We may now turn to emphasize a certain principle which must be continually borne in mind in the interpretation of His words about wealth. It is a manifest presupposition which lies back of all His teaching that this is God's world; that all things are made by God and rightly belong to Him. This is not specifically declared by Him in so many words, but it is an underlying assumption of all that He says, as it was of Old Testament thought in general. In coming to establish the Kingdom of God He was not invading foreign territory. He was simply claiming for God what was God's own; establishing, so to speak, a *de facto* sovereignty where a *de jure* sovereignty had existed all the time. This does not, however, quite express the true idea; God's sovereignty over the material universe was both a

fact and a right, but the free wills of men were not loyal to that sovereignty and obeyed another. To bring these disobedient wills into free and loving subjection to the divine will and thus establish a *moral* or *spiritual* Kingdom of God was His purpose. It is only from this fundamental presupposition that we can proceed to estimate aright His specific utterances about wealth, or indeed about anything else. Perhaps the failure to keep this basal assumption of His thought in mind has led to much confusion in the interpretation of His teaching on this important subject. The material things which men use are God's; the right of men in them is only secondary and derived. They are *for* men, but fundamentally *do not belong to* men. Not only do material things belong to God, but the human energies which make these things available for the satisfaction of human wants are from God and owe allegiance wholly and exclusively to Him. In the last analysis, therefore, all wealth is God's. It is vain to try to understand Jesus if we do not view every statement He makes through the medium of this principle.

Furthermore, there are certain aspects of the personal psychology of Jesus which should not be left out of mind, and cannot be without resulting confusion. In the first place, He was a Jew. Sometimes it has been maintained that He did not have the Oriental type of mind; that He did not in His mental constitution belong to a

type peculiar to any particular group; that His mind was universal, His modes of thinking uninfluenced by ethnical, sociological or temporal conditions. There is a measure of truth in the contention, but it is true only in a relative sense. Such a mind, instead of being equally at home in all climes and among all peoples, would really be lifted in lonely isolation out of intercourse with all human types, and unable to communicate with any except through a historically conditioned medium. Doubtless the mind of Jesus approximated as nearly the universal type as was consistent with His mission as the personal revelation of God. But that very mission made some temporal and racial limitations necessary. Apart from the theoretical inconsistency of the assumption that His mind was elevated above conditions of race and time, one cannot read the words of Jesus without having forced upon him the fact that, although His mind was truly marvelous in its simplicity and lucidity, He did, so far as the modes of His mental operations were concerned, think, or at any rate, express His thoughts in terms of the mental life of His race and age. This erects no impassable barrier between His mind and the minds of Western modern men. It is only necessary for us to remember that His language should be construed according to the modes of thought and expression current where He lived and taught; and not to read a certain meaning into His words because a Western man

of the twentieth century would mean just that in the use of the same expression. The Western man of to-day, discoursing on any particular topic, would as a rule not use the expression which Jesus used to convey practically the same meaning.

We should also bear in mind that Jesus was an enthusiast. To a mind that looks at life and destiny from a detached point of view and has contracted the habit of contemplating the vast complex of human relations and reactions simply as an object of scientific investigation, such an enthusiasm as His may seem extravagant. Or, a man whose temperament is cold, whose feelings are not intense, and whose moral valuations are not emphatic, might regard the tremendous intensity with which the soul of Jesus reacted upon moral conditions as an indication of fanaticism, and be unwilling to accept His injunctions as practicable principles of living until they had been liberally discounted. Certainly Jesus was not a scientific sociologist; nor a frigid and cautious conservative, whose chief fear was that he might go too far. That He was careful and discriminating there is an abundance of evidence; even His most unsympathetic critics, who think of Him as usually a victim of unregulated enthusiasm, must perforce admit, however inconsistently, that at times He exhibited an extraordinary balance of judgment. His feeling never swept away the barriers of a will which was under the direction

of a singularly clear intelligence. But He was on fire with an enthusiasm such as never blazed on the inner altar of another soul. His wonderful moral insight penetrated to the very depths of the muddy stream of life which flowed about Him; He perceived all its evil, much of which is hidden from the eyes of ordinary men; and the superlative moral sensitiveness of His soul felt it in all its horror. He reacted against it with the total strength of a personality whose force has dominated the world for twenty centuries. His words sound harsh sometimes, and sometimes extravagant; and one's first impulse often is to say, as was said by His hearers on one occasion, "He is beside Himself." But deeper meditation will bring the morally sensitive soul to say, when everything is considered, that He spoke only the truth. In other words, to understand Him properly an indispensable part of one's equipment must be a soul that feels profoundly the moral distinctions and appreciates with some approach to adequacy the importance of the human destinies that turn upon these distinctions. It is necessary to insist upon this because these subjective factors do play such an important part in the conclusions men reach about His teaching. It may be practicable to arrive at a scientific evaluation of a moral system, because there is an objective standard in social experience by which it can be judged. But the subjective factor inevitably enters in, especially in seeking to formu-

late from the detached and unsystematized utterances of a popular public teacher the system that lay in His mind. Sympathy with the teacher is indispensable; to be able to enter into his moral experiences is absolutely necessary; and this depends upon the moral organization of the student.

For this reason, doubtless, it will never be possible to reach unanimity as to what Jesus really meant in many of His utterances on ethical questions; and the difficulty is probably greater with respect to His deliverances concerning wealth than any other. It would be ungracious, to say the least, to suggest that some of the interpretations of His ethical doctrine have been deficient because of a deficiency of moral sensitiveness on the part of the interpreters; but the manifest possibility of a misunderstanding arising from this cause should certainly lead some of His critics to adopt a less flippantly dogmatic tone in depreciation of His ethics.

CHAPTER II

WEALTH—SPECIFIC TEACHINGS

In the light of the "fundamental principles" and "general considerations" previously discussed, the question we must now seek definitely to answer is, What was the attitude of Jesus toward wealth? It is surprising what widely different, even antagonistic, conclusions as to this important matter are reached by students of His teaching. One is at first tempted to give up as hopeless any effort to reach a sure answer to that important practical question. But notwithstanding these differences, the efforts have not been fruitless, and the continued examination of the matter bids fair at length to throw a guiding and most welcome light upon the most difficult and vexatious problem of our time. Men are struggling, somewhat blindly but with intense and irresistible earnestness, to develop an adequate private and public conscience concerning wealth, the vast increase of which in modern times is at once the most notable achievement and the most menacing peril of our civilization. I firmly believe that the chief factor in the organization of this conscience will be the teaching of the Nazarene, who spoke and wrought so many centuries ago. What did He specifically teach about it?

In taking up His specific utterances on this subject, we are met at the threshold by a question of interpretation which has attracted no little attention. The fact lies upon the very surface that the Fourth Gospel contains no report of these utterances. On the other hand, the Synoptics, each of which gives accounts of sayings of His on this theme, differ in striking ways in their reports. Practically everything that is in Mark is found either in Matthew or Luke, or both. When Matthew and Luke report the same sayings or discourses, Luke almost invariably gives them a sharper and more definite economic reference, in such a way as to give the impression of a more pronounced sympathy with the poor as such, and of antipathy toward the rich as such, and also adds some utterances not found in Matthew, which have the same tendency. The most significant of these variations will be noted in order further on. Reference is made to them here not for the purpose of going into a discussion of the various hypotheses suggested in explanation of their origin, questions which belong to a field of Biblical scholarship in which I make no pretence to special knowledge. The variations are perplexing, though not irreconcilable; but they make it necessary to exercise care in correlating these several reports in order to obtain a self-consistent conception of the attitude of Jesus toward the problem of wealth.

Consider first His general characterization of

wealth. He speaks of it as the "mammon of unrighteousness."[1] This expression is used in a connection in which He seems to be emphasizing its instrumental character. To this I shall refer later. At present it is important to note its association in His mind with unrighteousness. By the use of the word "mammon" He personifies it and represents it as a god of unrighteous character.

Again, He uses the phrase, "deceitfulness of riches."[2] The tendency to deceive, to lead astray the soul is regarded as inhering in riches. They lull a man into a false sense of security and complacency, lead him to false valuations, entangle him in cares which monopolize his attention and energy, and thus become a great hindrance to the progress of spiritual truth in the soul. In passing, we may note that in this parable, contrary to the general tendency, it is in Matthew and Mark that the language unfavourable to riches is absolute, while Luke's expression is relative or qualified. Both Matthew and Mark say that the seed sown in the soil of the soul preoccupied with riches and kindred lusts is rendered "unfruitful," without qualification; while Luke says it "brings no fruit to perfection."

Again, He speaks of wealth as a grave obstruction, preventing, or rendering extremely difficult, entrance into the Kingdom.[3] There lurks

[1] Luke 16:9-11. [2] Matthew 13:22; Mark 4:19.
[3] Matthew 19:23-26; Mark 10:23-27; Luke 18:24-27.

in it, therefore, a most serious spiritual danger. The words which He added in response to the expressed surprise of the disciples seem to indicate that it does not absolutely preclude entrance into the Kingdom; even over so serious an obstruction it is possible through the divine power to gain entrance.

We pause here to ask, Must we understand from these expressions that Jesus considers wealth an evil in and of itself? Some interpreters have given an affirmative answer, but this is manifestly incorrect. Such inferences are about as slipshod and inconsequential as the charge that the present-day agitation against the abuses of wealth is an attack on property. Many of the expressions of reformers to-day bear a rather striking resemblance to these characterizations of Jesus; and yet no one except those whose unjust privileges are menaced by reform supposes for an instant that such expressions indicate any hostility to wealth *per se*.

As soon as society advanced beyond primitive conditions in which the economic status of individuals or families was usually a true index of their industry and frugality, men perceived the fact that wealth and moral character do not presuppose one another; and once this dissociation of the two was fully effected in men's minds, it became apparent to moral insight that gain was one of the most powerful incentives—if not the most powerful—to wrongdoing that ever influ-

enced the human will. The more one thinks upon it, the more obvious this becomes. Wealth-seeking is the resultant of a number of the most potent motives that impel men. The desire for material possessions is a mighty cable which draws men into the struggle for gain. Disentangle it and examine its separate strands. There are, first, the desire for security against unforeseen conditions that might bring want; second, the desire for distinction for one's self and one's family; third, the desire for power, influence or control over one's fellow-men; fourth, the desire for sensuous satisfaction—comfort and luxury—for one's self and family. These are the most general separate motives that combine to impel men in the struggle for wealth, though they are by no means the only ones that may be operative in any given case. It is not necessary to emphasize the fundamental and powerful character of these motives. With the possible exception of the last—which is likely to indicate a sensual nature—they are not in themselves wrong; but they certainly are basal in human nature. They are four of the strongest springs of human action; and most men have had the conviction, implicit or explicit, that the surest road to the gratification of these desires was the accumulation of wealth. How shall we fortify ourselves against possible future want? Get wealth. How shall we achieve a high standing among our fellow-men? Get wealth. How shall we satisfy our sensuous desires for comfort, ease,

luxury? Get wealth. How shall we secure power over our fellow-men? Get wealth. This is the way the great majority of men have answered these questions; and these questions are but the translation into interrogative form of four of the primal impulses of life.

By the side of this fact we must place another, namely, that one of the easiest ways, perhaps *the* easiest way, to get wealth is to take it directly or indirectly from a weaker man. It may be taken by violent means, if there is no one else to hinder. It may be taken by superior shrewdness in trade, in the dealing of one man with another; and nearly always this may be done without any outside interference. In the more complex relations of a highly organized industrial society it may be done on a huge scale by a method against which it is difficult to find an effective means of prevention. When in the production of a given material value a large number of men have co-operated, it is not at all easy to determine exactly how much of the value the labour of each has contributed. If in such a case one man has or acquires the legal right to make the division and assign a share of the value to each of those who have co-operated in its production, his advantage is obvious and enormous; it is practicable for him, within certain wide limits, to appropriate to himself a lion's share of the jointly created product. That is precisely the position of advantage which the capitalist has secured in the present industrial organi-

zation. Of course, this proposition is true only with qualification. In a competitive system the price of labour is controlled by the law of supply and demand. The same is true as to land, raw material and the finished product; also as to rent and interest. It may be concluded, therefore, that the capitalist by no means controls the division of the joint product. But rent, interest and wages are not the only forms into which the joint product is divided. A good share takes the form of profits, and this share is usually appropriated *in toto* by the capitalist, though there is no ethical or rational ground on which he can establish an exclusive claim to it. It is a portion, and often a considerable portion, of the *joint product*. The capitalist claims it as a consideration for the risk he assumes; but as a matter of fact, he is by no means the only one whose interest is involved in the risk. The risk of the labourers, if not so obvious, is even more serious than his own; and yet they receive none of the profits except by his grace. Moreover, the rent and interest, which are also appropriated by the capitalist, are social products, determined by social conditions which he does not control for the very reason that they are in the last analysis values created by society at large, as every economist knows. It requires only a little reflection to perceive that most of the individual fortunes which have been acquired under this system consist largely of the values created by others. Indeed, only a little reflection

is needed for it to become apparent that in all times and under every system of economic organization that has ever existed, except the most primitive one—if indeed it was not in some measure true under that—large fortunes have usually been acquired by some method of appropriating values created by others. Some way for the strong man to get the advantage of the weak man has always been available, and there are never lacking those who are willing to take advantage of it.

In view of the powerful motives at work and the ease with which they may be gratified by the appropriation of values created by others, it is evident that men will be impelled by them to the use of that method unless deterred by powerful considerations. What considerations will do this? They must be internal, moral restraints or external, forcible restraints. But, as we know, external, forcible restraints have not been effective. Certain methods of appropriating the values created by others may be forbidden by the law; but such prohibitions are usually imposed after the wrong has been committed and are not retroactive; and when men are debarred from the use of old methods of exploitation, new ones are soon invented, so long as the internal, moral restraint is not sufficient to deter them. The situation, therefore, is this: that nothing but an internal, moral restraint, proportionate in strength to these fundamental motives that impel to wealth-seek-

ing, can prevent men from being led by these incentives to wrong their weaker fellows. This is certainly true so long as the economic life is organized on the basis of competitive self-seeking and our ideals of success are so tainted with materialism. The materialistic standards of success, rooting and strengthening themselves in the present economic organization of society, render necessary, in order that those powerful desires shall not sweep men into wrong-doing, a degree of internal moral restraint which comparatively few men have ever possessed. Indeed, as economic activity is and has been organized for ages, it is very difficult for a man of the highest moral ideals actually to live by these ideals in it; and some exceptional men in recent times have made peace with their consciences by striving to reform current economic methods even while conforming to them in their business activity. They accumulate wealth by current methods which their consciences do not approve, and then make use of the wealth so acquired to change the system in which those methods alone are practicable. They seek to make use of the system for the purpose of overthrowing the system. This is an interesting moral phenomenon.

Most men, however, in their moral ideals will never rise far above the principles that are embodied and operative in the economic life of their time. It is easy, therefore, to see why it is that men of deep ethical insight and sensitive con-

sciences have perceived and felt deeply the close association of moral evil with wealth. In the time of Jesus the connection between them was closer and more obvious than it is now. If the analysis of the social situation in His time, given in a preceding chapter, is correct, the most significant aspect of it was the decadence and disintegration of the ethical standards of the ancient world, accompanied by a most alarming weakening of moral restraint within men; while the task of integrating society devolved to an extent never perhaps witnessed before or since upon external political force alone. Under such conditions it was natural and inevitable that wealth should be tainted with unrighteousness in an extraordinary degree.

Furthermore, we must consider wealth not only as to the method by which it is obtained, but with reference to the spiritual effect which its possession is likely to have upon its owner. As stated before, the Christian conception of wealth is that it fundamentally and primarily belongs to God; and, as such, the only justifiable use of it is for the advancement of God's purposes. Now, the conditions under which wealth is held and administered give rise to a constant temptation to use it for personal gratification. Under the social policy of individual ownership a man's right, within wide limits, to use the wealth in his possession according to his own pleasure is recognized and maintained. It affords him the means

to gratify his and his family's desire for sensuous satisfactions of every kind, and such a use of it is socially approved. He has these strong desires; he has the means of gratifying them; social standards justify him in using it for these ends. What more natural than that he should do it?

In this connection an important psychological fact should be borne in mind. When the average man is considering what use he shall make of his wealth, his own needs and desires will be central in his consciousness, of course; will bulk more largely, so to speak, in his perception, thinking and feeling than the needs and desires of others; and, as they are more keenly realized, will proportionally influence his conduct. The only man of whom this will not be true is one who has reached such a high level of moral development that the needs and desires of others are as important to him as his own, and *are* truly his own—that is, a man who is approximately perfect in moral character. In every case in which approximate moral perfection has not been attained a man will use his wealth more largely for his own gratification than for the promotion of the welfare of others. The possession of wealth, therefore, tends toward self-indulgence in all but persons of the loftiest character. It is anti-spiritual in tendency. The possession of the means of self-indulgence is a constant suggestion to practice it, and self-indulgence not only hinders the upward development of character,

but is disintegrating and destructive. In the light of the foregoing considerations, it is clear that the temptations to the selfish conception of privately-owned wealth are exceedingly powerful and can be overcome only by men of high moral enthusiasm and thoroughgoing spiritual consecration. The language of Jesus is manifestly none too strong, "How hardly shall they who have riches enter into the Kingdom of God." The language means exactly what it says. An exceedingly grave moral and spiritual difficulty confronts the rich man; but with divine help it is possible to overcome it.

Now, these truths which are apparent to any thoughtful eye were especially obvious to Jesus, and stirred Him profoundly. It was the intense, passionate realization of these truths that found expression in the language we are discussing. His words cannot legitimately be construed as meaning anything more. The interpretation of them as an exhibition of hostility to wealth *per se* is without justification; and we hope later on to make this still more apparent.

Let us inquire next what His teaching is as to the accumulation of wealth.[4] Is it forbidden? In the first place, a distinction should be made between hoarded wealth and capital. Hoarded wealth is put away, hidden, or, at any rate, subtracted from reproductive uses, and held in idleness, either for the satisfaction of the abnormal

[4] Matthew 6:19 ff.

passion of avarice or for future consumption. Capital is that part of wealth which is used, not for consumption, but for further production. It is active and tends inevitably, therefore, to the economic benefit of all in proportion as it is more or less wisely and righteously used. In the time of Jesus there was comparatively little capital, unless land be classed as such. Agriculture had been for ages almost a passion with the Jew, and was still in great favour among those who remained in Palestine—in theory, at least—just as among the Jews of the dispersion trade was the prevailing occupation. But apart from land, capital, in the modern sense of the term, was not a very important factor in economic life. Household industry was yet the usual mode of production. Commerce was fairly active, but it was not conducted on a scale that made large capital necessary. On the other hand, there was much of hoarded wealth; and the passage we have under consideration gives us an accurate description of wealth held in this way. The treasure laid up where moth and rust corrupted it, and where it might be stolen by thieves, is hoarded wealth. The applicability of this injunction to this kind of wealth is obvious. Wealth laid away in this manner seems to have a peculiarly seductive power over the human heart. Its owner again and again returns to it to see if it is safe, gloats over it in secret, develops a strange and abnormal affection for it. It becomes truly a "treasure" in which

his heart is wrapped up. "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." The spiritual effect is obvious.

To-day very little wealth is hoarded. On the contrary, it is invested; it becomes productive; it gives employment to labour; and so at once creates and distributes material welfare. But does this imply that the injunction of Jesus does not apply to capital? Not at all. It is perhaps true that wealth held in this form does not so easily and naturally develop the miserly disposition in its owner as hoarded possessions; but it is by no means free from this tendency. Who does not know persons who possess some valuable stocks or bonds for which they have come to have a really miserly affection?

But apart from this, capital may be administered according to either of two policies. It may be handled in such a way as to give the capitalist himself the largest possible share of the product and leave to labourers and to the public at large the smallest possible share consistent with the continued operation of the business. In a word, it may be controlled primarily in the interest of the capitalist. The capitalist himself or his agent is the divider of the products; or, at any rate, he determines the policies of the business, appropriates rent and interest and has practically absolute control over the profits; and, as a rule, it is certainly the case that he retains all of it. So it often goes on piling

up as a mass of wealth ministering to the avarice and pride and sensuous satisfaction of its possessor, and conferring on others only such incidental benefits as are inseparable from its creation. Clearly such accumulation falls under the condemnation of Jesus. It is a laying up of treasures which are not less sure to decay and hardly less exposed to the danger of being appropriated by others in some "legitimate" way than the unproductive treasures, laid away in a secret place, are to the danger of simple theft. But it is not accumulation *per se* that is forbidden; a careful reading of the passage makes it evident that it is accumulation under certain conditions, by certain methods, in a certain spirit that is condemned.

Suppose, on the other hand, capital should be administered directly in the interest of all; so managed as to assure to the labourers not only a bare subsistence, but a life of decent comfort and the possibility of sharing in the higher values of life; and so as to secure to all, through cheapened prices, the largest practicable participation in the general wealth. Would such a use of it be consistent with the teaching of Jesus? It certainly would. It is not the creation of wealth, but the creation of wealth *primarily for self* that calls forth His disapprobation. There is no spiritual hurt to one's self in labouring to make the life of his fellow-man a little easier in an economic way. It does not degrade one's soul to try to lift the crushing load of poverty from the back

of a prostrate neighbour. Does He not enjoin His followers, time and again, to relieve the necessities of the poor? And if a man should try to do this by the kindly and brotherly administration of capital, would he be violating the law of Jesus? But it is degrading to go on piling up the means of material power and sensuous gratification for one's self, laying up treasures upon earth, without regard to the needs of one's suffering fellow-men.

From this point of view it does not seem difficult to answer the question whether Jesus approved of making money, of engaging in business for the purpose of increasing economic values. Did He regard this as the duty of some men, and did He command diligence in such an occupation? It is a reasonable and entirely justifiable inference that He did—*if the occupation be engaged in as a form of service for the world, and not from the selfish motive of gain.* A number of commentators in their eagerness to find in His teaching a justification for the money-making activities which engage most of the attention and energies of the modern business man, fall into a very questionable interpretation of such passages as the parables of the talents and the pounds, the unfaithful steward, etc.[5] It is a mistake to assume that His purpose in these parables is to teach the duty of diligent attention to business for the purpose of making money. He was referring to the diligence and loyalty which in economic relations a superior

[5] Matthew 25:14 ff.; Luke 19:13 ff.; 16:1-12.

requires of a subordinate as an illustration of the duty of faithful diligence on the part of God's servants in fulfilling the tasks assigned them by their divine Lord. Jesus is not here requiring His disciples to increase their earthly possessions by putting their money out to interest or by careful attention to business. The fact that He took His illustration from economic life does not of itself impose upon His disciples the obligation to engage in economic activity, nor necessarily have any reference at all to their engaging in such activity. Doctor Peabody goes so far as to say that "they [the persons referred to in these parables] are performing precisely that kind of service which He wishes His disciples to render." But we must not forget that the unjust steward was used also as an example for His followers; and yet certainly not with the view that they should engage in "precisely that kind of service." He was only using certain economic relations to illustrate certain aspects of our spiritual relations. In the application of these parables to His disciples the talents and pounds represent whatever they have received from God. That gift or bestowment or endowment must be regarded sacredly as a trust, for the use and development of which they must give an account. May the "talents" of the parable represent wealth? There is no reason to suppose that Jesus would not, under certain conditions, regard wealth as one form of trust committed to a man by God, which

he should go on increasing; on the contrary, there is every reason to suppose that He would. But what are those "certain conditions?" Would He thus regard any and all wealth that may actually be found in a man's possession? No; He could not consistently with His other utterances regard the wealth which was unjustly gained as a divinely committed trust. But that which the man has honestly earned, it is evident He would so consider.

To what specific use of wealth, then, do these parables bind the disciple? Do they require him to use it as capital in further production; to give it away to the poor; to contribute it for the maintenance and propagation of religious teaching; for the establishment of institutions for public benefit? The parables contain no suggestion as to these details. They only illustrate and enforce the principle that it must be used as a trust in the service of God. If employed as capital for productive purposes, such a use of it must be both in motive and method a service of God, which is only another way of saying, must promote the highest welfare of one's fellow-men. Only such an administration of capital would receive the approbation of Jesus. The obligation to engage in business and to be diligent in business is laid upon us only if we engage in business as a service to God and to our fellow-men.

If the altruistic administration of capital were once generally adopted it would prove to be not

only a good ethical and spiritual policy, but good economics as well. It would lead to the general and equitable distribution of wealth, as well as to its abundant creation; would prevent the development of abnormal fortunes on the one hand, and of abnormal poverty on the other; would relegate unrighteous cut-throat competition to a semi-barbarous past, as dueling has been; and would go as far as economic method could go, and that is a good way, toward promoting personal and social righteousness.

However, the question now before us is not so much the practicability of this use of capital; it is to determine what the teaching of Jesus really is. It may be held with considerable plausibility that such an administration of capital in our present economic organization is impracticable. But if His teaching is not practicable in a social organization such as that which existed then or that which exists now, that is another matter. It becomes more evident with continued study that Jesus was not enjoining a mode of life with reference to its practicability in the existing social order, but with reference to its essential righteousness. So far as His program had reference to this world at all, its central idea was the coming of a social order within which such a life as He enjoined would be both practicable and normal. The general evils resulting from the selfish administration of privately controlled capital are becoming

increasingly offensive to the conscience of the world, and all signs indicate that we are rapidly approaching a crisis in which, if the motive of general welfare does not dominate the use of privately controlled capital, collective control will be instituted. If the Christian motive is not practicable in the present capitalistic organization of industry, so much the worse for that organization.

The passages in which Jesus pronounced a blessing upon the "poor" or the "poor in spirit" and a woe upon the "rich"[6] deserve a special consideration. The first thing which engages our attention in these important passages is the difference between Matthew's report of these words and Luke's, for there is no very good reason to doubt that both evangelists are reporting the same sermon. According to Luke, the blessing is pronounced upon the "poor," without any qualifying phrase, and is addressed to them directly in the second person; while Matthew introduces the important qualifying phrase "in spirit," and makes it a general statement in the third person. A similar divergence occurs in the form of the beatitude which is given as the second in Luke and the sixth in Matthew. Luke says, "Blessed are ye that hunger now;" Matthew, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness." Luke adds the woes pronounced upon the "rich" and the "full," which are wanting in Matthew. We have previously adverted to the characteristic

[6] Matthew 5:3; Luke 6:20-25.

of Luke's Gospel as compared with Matthew's, and it is not our purpose to discuss that question further, except as it relates to these special passages, which are the most important instances of the alleged inconsistency between the two Gospels. Is there any real inconsistency? We think not. We need not concern ourselves as to which reports most literally the words of Jesus. There is excellent reason to believe that in the current usage of these phrases among the people to whom He was speaking they were practically equivalent in meaning. Rogge says: "The translation (of the word '*anawim*') with πτωχός renders its meaning only imperfectly, as it does not coincide with our social concept '*poor*,' but rather indicates a union of '*pious*' in the Jewish sense (righteous) and '*oppressed*' in the political and social sense." This is apparent if one compares the parallel expressions in the Magnificat of Mary.[7] In the Book of Enoch the poor and lowly are often mentioned together. The "poor" and the "poor in spirit," those who are "hungry now" and those who "hunger and thirst after righteousness" are as a rule the same; and the "rich" and the "full" are usually identical with those whose hearts are proud and set against the Kingdom. It may be, therefore, that in Luke there are preserved the literal words which Jesus used, and in Matthew their real significance.

To insist on inferring from the language in

[7] Luke 1:46 ff.

Luke that the attitude of Jesus toward the rich and poor was determined not by their moral and spiritual state, but by the simple possession or non-possession of wealth, is to use a literalism in interpreting Him which was absolutely foreign to the whole spirit and method of His teaching. It was not the bare fact of poverty or riches, apart from any moral implication, in which He was interested, but the spiritual attitude of men, their preparedness for the Kingdom *as influenced by their economic status.* We need to be reminded continually that this was the point of view from which Jesus regarded and dealt with economic questions; and there can be no doubt that He regarded the accumulation, possession and enjoyment of wealth in the midst of the general poverty of one's fellow-men as extremely dangerous, if not fatal, to spiritual character; just as, on the other hand, there can be no question that He found the poor in an attitude of spirit which rendered them, as a rule, open and accessible to His influence.

We come now to consider that phase of the problem which has given rise to the most serious difficulty and, as I think, misunderstanding as to the teaching of Jesus concerning wealth. The question is threefold—first, did Jesus require His disciples to forsake their earthly possessions, or to sell them and distribute the proceeds among the poor; second, if He did, was the requirement general and absolute; and third, on what ground

was it based?[8] To the first question there can be but one answer. Certainly in specific cases and under some circumstances this requirement was made. The case of the rich young man is recorded in all three of the Synoptic Gospels and without any very important variation except that Luke's account of the injunction to sell his possessions and to distribute the proceeds among the poor is stated in a little more emphatic terms: "Sell *all* that thou hast." But was this a general rule? Was it required of all disciples without regard to circumstances? It is not stated as a general rule in Matthew and Mark, but in Luke are found words which have the sound of a general law laid upon all who would follow Jesus. "Sell that ye have and give alms." This seems to have been spoken to the general body of disciples, not to individuals in special conditions. Unquestionably serious difficulty arises if it is taken as a general law imposed upon all disciples; and this is the meaning insisted upon by a certain group of interpreters. They account for this alleged attitude of Jesus toward worldly possessions on the ground that He was looking for an immediate catastrophic termination of the existing world-order and the miraculous inauguration of the Kingdom. In view of this impending change He enjoined upon His followers to divest themselves of earthly goods, which would soon be destroyed or rendered valueless, and use them to gain spir-

[8] Luke 12:33; 18:22: Matthew 19:21; Mark 10:21.

itual merit by alms-giving and thus secure for themselves a better reward in the new divine order about to be instituted. In the light of this expectant attitude all His utterances about wealth, they say, become plain. How could one, they ask, have a normal attitude toward material goods who was living in daily expectation of the destruction by divine power of the whole order of the world and the coming of a new heaven and a new earth in which all human arrangements would be different? Under such conditions the seeking of wealth, its accumulation and its retention would divert the minds of people from that which should wholly engage them, viz., preparation for the imminent change; and so would be hurtful, and would be gross folly, since by the distribution of it as alms the possessors of wealth might convert it into equivalent spiritual advantages in the new order.

The bare statement of the theory arouses suspicion of its truth, notwithstanding its plausibility. It does not harmonize with other portions of His teaching. In the first place, it does not seem to proceed from the same mind that gave utterance to those ethical principles and precepts which all ages are compelled to admire for their extraordinary sanity. Those who maintain this hypothesis feel this inconsistency, and represent Him at one time as the sane moral genius enlightening the world with His moral insight, and at another time as swayed by an intense, sombre,

ecstatic mood which converted him into an impractical and austere visionary. But on this hypothesis the inconsistency between these different parts of His teaching is more profound than one of mood; it is one of ethical quality. The injunction to get rid of one's earthly possessions because they are soon to be worthless anyhow, and in so doing to transmute them through almsgiving into treasures which one can enjoy in the new order, does not seem ethically to be of a piece with His other teachings. Others, therefore, who hold to this interpretation, seeing the error of attributing these inconsistent ethical attitudes to the same person, solve the difficulty by assuming that we have in the Gospels two pictures of Jesus which are essentially unlike. But it is this interpretation which itself gives rise to the difficulty and which we think is negatived by other utterances of His on the specific subject of wealth. Look, for instance, at His parable of the rich fool, in which the warning against laying up treasure upon earth is based not upon the prospect of the immediate downfall of the world-order, but upon the uncertainty of the individual life and upon the manifest tendency of wealth to seduce the soul into selfish materialism and a false sense of security—that is, upon its spiritual effects.

Consider now another very instructive passage.[9] The requirement here made to forsake all earthly possessions is stated as a general condi-

[9] Luke 14: 25-33.

tion of discipleship, but note that it does not occur in any apparent connection with the expectation of immediate collapse of the world-order and that it does occur in connection with other injunctions of an equally severe, if not more radical, character, such as the command to hate one's father and mother and even one's own life. Now, to take these latter injunctions in the literal sense is to attribute moral idiocy to Jesus. It is literalism gone mad to insist that He required His disciples literally to *hate* their parents and to *hate* their own lives; and it is not too much to say that such an interpretation betrays a moral inability to enter into sympathy with Jesus, without which it is impossible to understand Him. It would seem that the meaning is plain enough to a well-balanced soul. It is a strong, even passionate, statement of an intensely honest and earnest spirit. He was calling upon men to follow Him; and they were responding, but without any adequate realization of the great sacrifices involved; and He was setting before them in the strongest possible light the unreserved and uncompromising character of the devotion to this cause which would be required of them, in order that they might be stimulated to a proper consideration of the serious step they proposed to take, and that all might be deterred who were moved by any motive that would not stand the extreme tests to which His followers would inevitably be subjected. He used what seems to

those who stand in cool aloofness from the strenuous circumstances the language of extravagant hyperbole. But it was not extravagant then. Those disciples were entering upon a way which actually for many of them, and possibly for all of them, would lead to the sundering of the dearest ties of nature and the yielding up of their own lives. Nor is it extravagant yet. He is not more than half a man who has not found some cause that to him is worthy of "the last full measure of devotion;" and he is less than a Christian who does not find in the Kingdom of God a cause that transcends all others in its claims upon the human heart.

Now, it was under such circumstances and in such a spirit that the general statements about disposing of all one's wealth were made. In these utterances He was not laying down hard and fast legal requirements to which His followers would have to conform their external conduct under all possible circumstances. He was enforcing a spiritual principle—absolute consecration to the cause that is supreme. Fundamentally it is a question of relative values. The Kingdom is the supreme value rising above that of the temporal life itself. For the realization of the Kingdom, the followers of Jesus must always be willing to sacrifice all other interests; and, if circumstances render it necessary, must do so in fact. If attachment to those bound to us by ties of blood seduces us from consecration to the spiritual ends of life—and con-

ditions may arise in which this would be the case—even those bonds of nature are to be disregarded. If the heart becomes so attached to earthly possessions that they take precedence over the interests of the spiritual life, it is better to cut out this cancer of materialism by the roots. This is the explanation of the Master's injunction to the rich young man, whose personal qualities excited His admiration, to dispose of his wealth and give himself without reservation to the service of the Kingdom.

There is no serious difficulty in correlating His requirements as to wealth with the general principles of His ethics. Reference has already been made to the fact that the situation of the Kingdom with regard to the "world" was peculiar at the beginning. Jesus was gathering out of the unfriendly world a little group of disciples who were called by the circumstances not only to segregate themselves and stand in sharp opposition against the world-order as then organized, but also to devote themselves to a propagandism which exposed them to violent persecution, and, in any case, required the absolute concentration of their time and energy. It is manifest that under such conditions it would often be necessary for them to decide between holding on to their earthly possessions and whole-hearted devotion to this duty. Frequently the possession of property would not only divide their attention and interest with the task of the Kingdom in the form in which

it then presented itself, but would otherwise prove an incumbrance; and likewise might family connections, under such circumstances, sometimes prove a fatal handicap to the faint-hearted. *It is a commonplace of ethics that the same principle of duty will require different courses of conduct in situations which are fundamentally different.* It would be a veritable and intolerable bondage to the letter—against which Jesus fought most strenuously—to urge as eternally binding upon His followers the very same requirements as to external conduct which He laid upon His disciples in a peculiar situation. Whatever else Jesus was, He was not a legal literalist. It may be urged that it is dangerous to insist upon the principle of freedom in the application of His principles. Very true. The freedom of the spirit has its dangers, and its abuses have been most lamentable; but the dangers of bondage to the letter are far greater, and its consequences are always and everywhere disastrous. It was Jesus Himself who broke the shackles of this most deplorable and degrading bondage from the human spirit; and this simple fact, which is of capital importance, seems again and again to have been forgotten or ignored by some men who have sought to determine His doctrine concerning wealth.

Our argument has led us to the point where His doctrine concerning alms-giving and the treatment of the poor should be considered. If there has been a tendency to consider His general teaching

concerning wealth without reference to the fundamental principles of His ethics, the confusion to which it leads has nowhere been so manifest as in relation to the giving of alms. His fundamental moral principle is love, showing itself in active helpfulness. When He enjoins the giving of alms the motive most certainly is not selfish. The purpose is not that the giver may by this overt act win eternal life. The motive which He enjoins is helpfulness to the poor. It is absolutely impossible to reconcile any other conception of the motive and significance of alms-giving with the body of His teaching. Before Him were great masses of people who were in destitution, in actual want. Over against that mass of dire poverty there stood a comparatively few well-to-do and a still smaller number of rich persons; and their wealth, for the most part, be it remembered, was accumulated by unethical means. There were no organized methods of helping those who were in need; nor in the actual state of things was it practicable to establish such agencies.

With such a situation confronting him, no believer in the doctrine of brotherly love could fail to perceive and proclaim the duty of alms-giving. The question was not whether a better way of helping the helpless could ultimately be found. The question was, What was a man's duty, then and there? Even now, with all our sociological enlightenment, when starving people face us we feel it to be a solemn

duty as well as privilege to give alms, notwithstanding our realization of the essential defectiveness of the method. In the situation that confronted Jesus, and which has in fact confronted in more or less acute form every generation since the dawn of history, the only alternative was to give immediate aid to the hungry and homeless poor or see them die of want. Here we must follow Nietzsche or Jesus. There ought to be a better way; and slowly out of accumulating social experience we are finding methods of dealing with poverty which are an improvement upon direct alms-giving. In fact, there ought to be no dire poverty at all, and if the ethical principles of Jesus were actually embodied in social organization and practice there would be none, or practically none; but in the meantime extreme poverty must be helped. To let men die around us because alms-giving is not the ideal means of dealing with want would be to sink into the moral status of savagery. Have our social ideals grown to be so lofty that in order not to sacrifice them we must practice barbarism?

Jesus has not enjoined alms-giving as the exclusive and sufficient method of dealing with the ghastly problem of destitution. Not only would the whole-hearted and thoroughgoing application of His principle speedily put an end to the problem, but His method of dealing with the situation before that glorious consummation is achieved includes far more than giving pennies or dollars

directly to the needy or filling the treasuries of charitable organizations. The real emphasis of His doctrine is upon loving helpfulness, and that means personal contact, encouragement, stimulation. What He calls for is not the tossing of material aid across an impassable social gulf, nor the bridging of that chasm by a charitable society. His method is that the wealthy should draw near in simple brotherliness to those who need the touch of human sympathy and appreciation more than they do bread and clothes and shelter. To treat them as our human brothers and help them to realize their humanity is the larger duty within which alms-giving, when the situation demands it, is included as a factor. The evil has been and is that alms-giving is so frequently substituted for the whole obligation, and then it is no longer a fulfillment of the law of Jesus. It is equally a mistake to suppose that indiscriminate alms-giving accords with His spirit. Here again we must beware of literalism in interpreting Him. True He says, "Give to him that asketh of thee;" or, according to Luke's reading, "to every man that asketh thee;" and if taken with Pharisaic literalness, which was abominable to Him who uttered them, the words would mean that we should give blindly without any regard to the circumstances or the character or motives of the beggar. Of course, a more pernicious social policy could hardly be imagined; but such a construction of the language is absurd. For it erects the injunc-

tion into a hard and fast external rule of conduct which violates the very principle of which it was intended to be an application. That principle, let us repeat, is love expressing itself in practical helpfulness, whereas such an indiscriminate and careless practice of charity would be neither loving nor helpful. When Jesus lays upon us the obligation to help our fellows there would not seem to be any need of making explicit the implication that we should give the aid in the form in which it is needed. We can not help those who need no help, nor can we help those who do need it except in the form in which they need it. If we follow His injunction, the giving of material aid is only one form, and that not the most important, of self-giving; and indiscriminate giving cannot be practiced where the self goes along as the major part of the gift.

No better illustration of this principle can be found than His injunction to the host who bade Him and His disciples to a feast[10]—an injunction which has, however, suffered grievously from neglect, on the one hand, and vicious literalistic interpretation on the other. Some of His followers, who are supposed to take His teachings as the law of life, have found it convenient to slur over this passage, or to explain it in such a way as to empty it of all practical significance; while the critics of His ethics insist upon construing it in a baldly literal sense so as to dis-

[10] Luke 14:12-14.

credit His teaching as a practicable program of living. According to the latter, it would actually bind the Christians *never* to invite to their tables their friends and brethren, and whenever they gave dinners to fill their tables with social dependents. That is, they would construe the language of a popular Jewish teacher of two thousand years ago as they would the language of a modern professor of ethics in a twentieth century university, and do this in the name of scientific criticism! One would go far to find a more childishly unscientific proceeding.

The great majority of Christians seem, on the contrary, to understand Him to mean that when they give dinners they should *always* invite their friends and brethren and rich neighbours and *never* invite anybody else, least of all the poor and the helpless. It is an even choice between the two methods of dealing with His words. Again, we must interpret this detached incidental saying in the light of His general principle. The lesson He is enforcing is the duty, in general, of treating the needy classes as our brethren, of respecting and appreciating their essential humanity in order that we may really help them, of stepping over that social chasm which has been created by the unequal and unethical distribution of wealth, of identifying ourselves with those who have failed and gone down in the struggle of life; and the duty, in particular, of utilizing "social functions" as a means of helping those who

need to have their self-respect reinforced, even more than they do material aid. Such "functions" are, as a rule, utilized for quite different and often for precisely opposite ends. Not seldom they are flagrant and even disgusting exhibitions of pride, costly and wasteful advertisements of one's social exclusiveness, and skillfully calculated to impress the uninvited with one's social elevation above them. That such conduct calls forth the condemnation of Jesus is not to be wondered at; nor is it remarkable that He seized the opportunity to point out how such occasions should be used, not to sunder social classes more widely, but to knit them together in human brotherhood. A common-sense application of this principle in daily life, especially under modern conditions, would not be easy; but, if done with the moral tact which can be learned in the school of Jesus and there alone, would accomplish untold good and would do no damage to anything except the artificial and superficial culture, the spirituality as well as the genuine human joy of which has been fatally chilled in the bleak air of excessive conventionality.

We may fittingly bring to a conclusion this discussion of His specific teaching as to wealth with a study of that most interesting incident, His meeting with Zaccheus. There is preserved for us no word of the conversation with Zaccheus in the privacy of the latter's home. We can only infer what Jesus said by the publican's remark-

able response. Two impressions, very definite and very powerful, seem to have been made upon him. First, a sense of social obligation. All about him were the suffering poor. He felt the impulse to help them; and the obvious, indeed, the only practicable, way open to him, as things were then, was the direct distribution of charity. Upon this we need not dwell after what has just been said. Second, a realization of the fact that his wealth was in large measure ill-gotten; and the impulse of a rectified conscience to make abundant restitution was the inevitable moral result. A man who holds in his possession wealth which he knows has been created by others needs only a moderate degree of moral sensitiveness to make him uncomfortable, whether or not the method by which he has gained it is in accord with existing social standards. According to the social standard embodied in the policy of the Roman Empire, the wealth of Zaccheus was legitimately acquired; according to the standard of Jewish opinion, it was not. But he had come in contact with a moral personality who had opened his eyes to a higher standard than either, and henceforth that wealth burned in his hands. A fourfold restitution alone would ease the pain of his conscience.

This incident is far-reaching in its suggestions. How much wealth was there at that time in the hands of rich men which could be justified by a high standard of ethics? Did not such fortunes usually consist of accumulations of values created

by others? Press the question further. How many individual fortunes are there to-day which do not consist in large part of values created by others? To one who carefully looks into the social processes by which wealth is created, it is manifest that if all the values not created by the owner of a large fortune were subtracted from it, it would shrink to a fraction of its present volume. Here lies the extremely difficult ethical problem of wealth which some critics of Jesus' teaching have not squarely faced. What does a high, clean conscience call for in such a situation? It is easy enough to denounce as absurd and anti-social the demand that rich men should surrender the wealth which they hold and selfishly enjoy, but which they did not produce; but if they retain and continue to use for personal ends the values created by others, is there nothing morally absurd and anti-social in that? There arises in every healthy conscience a demand which cannot be hushed, that the portion of wealth which the individual did not himself create, but which by some method, socially approved or not, has come into his possession, should in some form or other be returned to its real creators. This is an elementary requirement of honesty, and is wholly distinct from the further question as to the proper use of the wealth which is the product of the individual's own effort. The Christian principle calls for the consecration of this portion of one's wealth also. That wealth which one himself creates should be

used by him in the service of his fellow-men; but that which he did not create he can not retain and use for himself without a conflict with elementary moral standards. The problem does not become less difficult with the advancing complication of the social processes; but, on the other hand, the necessity for its solution does not become less insistent. The stern demands which Jesus made upon the possessors of wealth in His day may seem to those who take a superficial view of the conditions severe and impracticable. But the more profoundly one looks into the matter, the more obvious it becomes that His principles must somehow be put in practice, unless we are to accept with resignation the pessimistic conclusion that human society cannot be organized on an ethical basis.

It may be said that the politico-economic order lies outside the proper sphere of Christian ethics, that the system of society is a part of the *natural* order, in which natural forces operate. Accordingly, when a man enters into the organized relations of society he is, as a political and economic factor, subject to the control of natural forces to which ethical principles and ideals are inapplicable. Ethical law is no more applicable there, we are told, than in the realm where the laws of gravitation, heat, light, electricity and chemical affinity hold sway. When a flash of lightning strikes a man dead, we do not feel that the electricity has violated a moral law; and when a man

is crushed by the play of economic forces, there is no ethical question involved. Some thinkers have actually sought the solution of the problem along this line; that is, they solve the ethical problem of the economic and political life by just saying there is no ethical problem of economic and political life.

But if ethical law has no more applicability to the economic and political processes than to the sphere of natural forces, why is it, pray, that they find it necessary to invent this theory of the limits of ethical law? Nobody finds it necessary to insist that ethical principles are not applicable to the natural forces of gravitation and electricity. A better scientific grasp of the issues involved makes manifest the emptiness of this subterfuge. These men seem to forget that out of the very social processes which they say lie beyond the sphere of moral sanctions arise the moral laws which perversely insist that these processes *are* within their jurisdiction. In the clash and struggle of human forces, as men strive for possessions and power, are generated moral standards for the very purpose of bringing those forces under moral control. This has been the case in every civilization that has developed on the earth. It is said in reply that out of the economic and political processes there is developed a specific ethic which alone is properly applicable in those spheres; and so it turns out that it is the Christian ethic alone that is

barred from this territory. But why? No reason is given for treating the Christian ethic as thus unrelated to the general ethical development of man, except that it is inconsistent with the actual on-going of those economic and political processes. But out of the very heart of these processes themselves there has arisen the most urgent criticism of them and an insistent demand for radical changes in the interest of human welfare; and the sole question that is open to debate is whether the changes required by the Christian ethic would promote human welfare. It is no longer open to question among intelligent students that profound and sweeping changes will be effected sooner or later, by peaceable or by violent means; and the anxious inquiry of a multitude of earnest souls is: Will the Christian ethic guide us safely, by a method that will conserve all the real values of present civilization, to the realization of a better one?

CHAPTER III

POVERTY AND EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION

THERE are certain questions concerning Jesus' conception of wealth which cannot be categorically answered by the citation of any specific utterances of His. At best, they can only be inferentially answered.

One of the most important is this: Did He see in poverty any spiritual disadvantages? That He saw in wealth a menace to the soul's highest life there can be no question; but how about poverty? Is not that in another way quite as menacing? Has it not special temptations and perils of its own? If wealth tends to generate pride, does not poverty tend to break down self-respect? If the rich look down with contempt, do not the poor look up with envy? If wealth leads naturally to sensuous self-indulgence, does not poverty, by the grinding physical toil which it necessitates, harden and brutalize? If the possession of wealth relaxes the will and enfeebles the conscience, does not poverty produce a similar effect through the depression and discouragement which it induces? If wealth dissipates the energy of the life in careless pleasure-seeking, does not poverty burn it up in fruitless anxiety? Certainly every modern student of the subject would answer these ques-

tions in the affirmative. But it has been maintained that, while Jesus perceived and emphasized the moral danger of riches, He seems to have exhibited no consciousness that poverty is fraught with danger to the higher life.

The assumption that Jesus regarded poverty as the ideal economic state betrays a surprising lack of insight into His teaching. Why, then, did He impose the obligation to help the poor? If their condition were the ideal one from His point of view, it is certain that He would not have sought to change it. If to be in destitution were the best possible situation for a man's spiritual life, Jesus would certainly have said, leave him in destitution. Whatever else He may have thought, it is absolutely certain that He considered the needs of the soul as infinitely more important than the needs of the body. If physical want were in His judgment best for the soul, it is beyond question that He would have enjoined upon His followers to leave their fellow-men in want and to seek in every proper way to reduce them to want. If He considered an empty stomach as contributory to the fulfillment of the spiritual life, He assuredly would not have made it obligatory to feed the hungry. If His advice to certain rich persons to divest themselves of their property were based upon the assumption that penury is in itself the economic status most conducive to the development of the higher life, is it not most absurd that He should have bidden

them in the same breath to distribute their wealth among the poor? Did He bid men seek their own spiritual welfare by imperiling that of their fellow-men? It is self-evident that He did not regard poverty, in the sense of destitution, as the ideal economic state, but exactly the opposite.

It is true, however, that He did not anywhere explicitly bring out and emphasize the spiritual disadvantages of poverty; and it is fair to enquire as to the reason for this. Without presuming to be able to tell why He did not say some things which He might have said, some illuminating suggestions may, I think, be made as to the reason for this particular omission. There seem to be two excellent reasons. In the first place, there was current a definite and time-honoured belief that material prosperity was an evidence of the divine favour, that the possession of wealth was a sign of spiritual merit; and that poverty was the sure result of wrong-doing and the mark of the disfavour of God. Whether or not this correlation of wealth with spiritual merit and of poverty with spiritual demerit were approximately correct in the primitive conditions of society, it certainly was no longer so. But the idea persisted as a postulate of popular belief and reenforced the tendency of wealth to inflate the soul of its possessor with pride and the tendency of poverty to depress and discourage those who dwelt under its chilling shadow. This popular error Jesus had to combat. To break up this

false association of economic with spiritual conditions was absolutely necessary before a sane view of these matters would become possible. How should He do it? To dwell upon the spiritual disadvantages of poverty or upon the spiritual advantages of plenty would have strengthened it and have fortified the rich in their arrogance and the poor in their mental distress and discouragement.

The foregoing would seem to be a sufficient justification of the course He pursued; but there was also another. We may safely assume that, as a rule, men are not poor by preference. Here and there individuals and small groups have arisen who deliberately chose the life of destitution; but they have been so exceptional as only to bring out in relief the general fact that poverty is not a matter of choice. What, then, are the causes of poverty? First, we know that many men have been poor simply because they could not help it, or at any rate have not known how to avoid it. Ignorance and comparative weakness unquestionably explain much of it. Many of the poor, perhaps most of them, have simply lost out in the competitive struggle of life. Second, as modern investigations have shown, it is often the result of misfortune or of ill-health. Third, in many cases, without doubt, it is, and always has been, due to immorality. Carelessness, wastefulness, vice in one form or another is often the explaining cause; but even in such

cases the poverty cannot be called a matter of direct choice. It has come as the undesired and usually unlooked-for result of vicious courses of conduct. Fourth, in some cases—though in our day such cases are rare, and probably always have been—it is the result of conscientiousness. Some men have been poor because conscience forbade them to avail themselves of means of gain which were open to them. We may treat such rare cases as negligible, certainly in our modern life, though there is reason to believe that they were much less rare among the poor of Palestine in the days of Jesus. We may say then, in general, that for the most part poverty is due either to conditions over which the poor have no control or to some form of vice. This is a real distinction; but, as a matter of fact, it is rare that the two classes of causes are distinctly separable in their working. In concrete cases they are often both present and so intervolved that it is not practicable to tell which is primary and which secondary. But for the sake of convenience we may treat them as entirely distinct, and enquire, How should a moral teacher deal with these two classes of the poor?

Take first the class who are poor because they cannot help it. If one wished to help them, would it be wise to discourse to them about the spiritual dangers of poverty? Would it be either kind or profitable to warn them that their poverty was a condition which rendered it difficult

for them to develop the highest character? Doubtless there are moral lecturers who would be sufficiently unintelligent, unsympathetic and unpedagogical to proceed in that way; but Jesus was not one who could thus "break the bruised reed" or "quench the smoking flax." If a man is in a perilous situation from which he has no power to extricate himself, it is the part of cruelty or of folly to fix his attention upon the difficulties and dangers which encompass him. What this class of the poor primarily need above all else is sympathy, encouragement, invigoration, the inspiration of hope. Hence, Jesus always spoke to them in such terms as were calculated to inspire and encourage. As we have seen, their poverty inclined them to hear His message with gladness; but this does not imply that He regarded this state as the ideal one in which they should remain. They needed encouragement, but that was not all. They needed also to be warned against the particular evil and hurtful dispositions which their situation was likely to engender, such as mental depression, bitterness of spirit, anxiety, hatred of the rich, materialism,—for poverty may produce a materialistic habit of mind which is just as hard and just as fatal to all the higher impulses of the soul as the selfish enjoyment of riches. Now, this is exactly the kind of treatment which the Good Physician of souls gave the poor. Primarily He gave sympathy, inspired hope, imparted vigor to the will; and He also

pointed out the evil of mental depression, anxiety, hatred, materialism; and sought to renew their confidence in the Infinite Goodness and to concentrate their desires upon spiritual values.

The poor who came to their poverty through their own fault He dealt with according to the same principles. Although their poverty was the result of moral delinquency, the treatment they required was the same, except that in their case emphasis needed to be placed upon the necessity of inward moral renewal; and surely no one can say that the method of Jesus was defective in this latter respect. To them also in their dejection, bitterness, anxious care, materialism and envious hatred of the prosperous He came not with lectures upon the disadvantages of poverty, but with sympathy, brotherliness, hope, inspiration; with the call to love and a spiritual valuation of life; and with pointed, even radical, emphasis upon the need of being made anew in the moral centre of their being.

It is not the purpose to convey the impression that He dealt with these two classes of the poor separately in His teaching. As already indicated, that was entirely impracticable because the two classes could not be clearly marked off from one another. Our purpose is to show that He dealt with poverty intelligently; that He did not regard it as the most desirable economic status, from His spiritual point of view, and that He adapted His method to the

actual moral needs of those who for any cause found themselves in this unfortunate condition. His manner of dealing with the rich was different, because their situation and needs were different. They needed to have it forced home upon their minds that the possession of wealth involved certain spiritual dangers; because, in the first place, it was necessary to dispel the deeply rooted error that their wealth was a badge of spiritual excellence, and, in the second place, because their condition in which the moral danger inhered was, unlike that of the poor, a matter of preference and choice; and it was far more practicable for them by an act of the will to extricate themselves from the perilous situation in which they stood.

From the modern point of view another striking negative feature of the teaching of Jesus as to wealth and its uses is the absence of any significant reference to the question of wages, which occupies so large a place in the present-day discussion of the problem. But perhaps we need first to establish the fact of such an omission. Some students have found, or think they have found, in the parable of the householder who went out to hire labourers for his vineyard a doctrine of wages which they pronounce very faulty and pernicious.[1] Certainly if Jesus meant in this parable to teach a doctrine of wages, it is impossible to harmonize it with our sense of justice or, we may add, with His other teachings. But

[1] Matthew 20: 1-16.

is that what He intended? It is evident that it is not. His purpose lay in an entirely different direction, as a study of the context shows. He had made the statement concerning the difficulty of a rich man's entrance into the Kingdom. His disciples were astonished. Peter, always ready to speak out his crude thought, reminded his Master that the disciples had forsaken all and followed Him, and asked, "What shall we have, therefore?" In reply, Jesus assured him that they should have an abundant reward, but intimated that the rewards would be distributed not according to any superficial rule, such as mere priority of entrance into the Kingdom, but that God would give rewards according to His clearer perception of the relative value of their services. It is often not the man whom men by their superficial standards judge to have sacrificed most and to be most worthy who really is most deserving. God's appraisement is very different from men's; not because it is more arbitrary, but because it is based upon a deeper insight and a better standard of values. Who will deny this?

There seems also to be a reference to a yet deeper truth, namely, that in the divine order of the world some men are chosen for greater services than others. This fact of functional distinctions and gradations among men—a fact which no conceivable organization of humanity could ever set aside—can only be referred for explanation to the inscrutable purpose which lies back of the

universe, which by the religious soul must always be conceived of as the divine will. But the selection of these chosen few does not seem an arbitrary preference of them over others as objects of the divine favour. It may *look* to be so, because every action or process the reason or cause of which does not appear to us, has the appearance of being arbitrary. This aspect of life can never be wholly removed so long as our knowledge of the universe is limited. Jesus is here illustrating this fact. But the parable itself contains the intimation that these persons so picked out for the performance of greater tasks are not to be the recipients of extraordinary privileges. If they receive greater rewards than others, their rewards are not of a material nature, and are based upon their greater sacrifices and services.

Such were the great truths which He sought to illustrate by a simile drawn from the economic life of the time. He no more meant to approve of this arbitrary method of compensating labourers than He meant, in the use of the parable of the unjust steward to illustrate a spiritual duty, to approve of the conduct of that unrighteous servant. He only sought by the use of the arbitrary action of this employer of labour to illustrate the fact that there are distinctions made among men in the divine order of the world for which our limited intelligence can discover no reasons. Only the fact that some apparently honest men have put a construction upon this

parable that makes it teach an unjust doctrine of wages can justify us in consuming time and space to point out its obvious fallacy.

In truth, Jesus gives us no doctrine of wages. Once He utters the truism, "The labourer is worthy of his hire;" but there He is speaking not about economic labourers, but about the right of His disciples to a living while propagating His gospel. The omission is not a matter of wonder. What we know as the "wage system of labour," which constitutes a problem of such magnitude for us, was not a characteristic feature of the economic life of His time; and if it had been, He was not a teacher of economics nor a labour agitator. He was teaching great ethical principles, and incidentally making applications of them to such concrete cases as called for His decision. By those great principles the wage system, like every other phase of human relations, must be judged. An inevitable inference from His principles is that an industrial system is unjustifiable and inhuman which, on the one hand, condemns a very large proportion of its workers to maintain themselves on an income which does not afford a basis for decent living, much less the possibility of sharing in any of the higher values of life; while it produces, on the other hand, a class of millionaires and multi-millionaires who cannot squander their superfluous riches in extravagant luxury. The only possible way in which the industrial system can be made

to square with His principles is that it should be so operated as to increase the income of the labourers and reduce the income of the capitalist to a standard of normal living, and this for the sake of the spiritual welfare of both classes.

It seems, then, to be a reasonable inference that Jesus regarded neither wealth nor penury as an ideal condition for the furtherance of the spiritual life. A modest competency according to the standards of living in any age, without any great disparity in the distribution of material goods, would, so far as economic status is concerned, accord with His conception of life. When one has sifted out of all His scattered utterances as to wealth and poverty the fundamental principles which underlie His whole treatment of the subject, it is evident that they reduce themselves to two: First, a superabundance of riches tends to obscure in the human heart the need of God, to inspire a false sense of security and independence, and at the same time to preoccupy and fill the mind with material concerns; while destitution produces despair, fear, anxiety, a materialistic habit of mind, and weakened confidence in the benevolent providence of God. Second, superabundance breeds pride, arrogance, and contempt for the lowly; while want engenders bitterness and hate for the prosperous. Great inequality in material possessions, therefore, sunders men into unfriendly, if not hostile, classes, and kills the spiritual sympathy that should bind men together

in a genuine brotherhood. Great economic disparity is opposed to the progress of the Kingdom in its two cardinal principles. It throws men into wrong attitudes toward God and toward their fellow-men, weakening or dissolving the two essential bonds that unite men in the blessed, divine-human fellowship out of which alone springs the noblest life of the spirit. Not wealth in itself, but inequitably distributed wealth is the "mammon of unrighteousness." It is clear, therefore, that the ethic of Jesus calls for such a distribution of material goods as will do away with these two extremes. It would abolish superabundance on the one hand, and want on the other. The former cannot exist without the latter, since they are relative and measured by the average standard of living; and unless they are eliminated, it is practically impossible to realize the Kingdom of God in this world.

Does He, then, give any clear indication as to how this equitable distribution is to be effected? Certainly His method of accomplishing this great result is neither superficial nor artificial. On one occasion He positively declined to interfere in a dispute about the division of an inherited property.[2] When asked to do so by one of the contestants, He answered, "Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?" and proceeded, no doubt to the disgust of the man who had sought His services, to deliver a solemn warning as to

[2] Luke 12: 13-21.

the danger of covetousness. It is a reasonable inference from His treatment of this incident that He would scornfully reject the foolish suggestion to attempt a redistribution of property among individuals. In the first place, in modern society it would be practically impossible to determine with any approach to accuracy just what each man's equitable share of it is. A moment's thought is sufficient for any rational mind to see the monumental absurdity of such an undertaking. All human energies are so inextricably interwoven in a mesh of co-operative and antagonistic reactions that to ascertain the relative efficiency of all these separate personal energies in the total economic output would absolutely baffle any intelligence that was less than infinite; and if infinite intelligence should apply itself to the task its decisions would so far transcend the possibility of human understanding that they would render the whole situation more profoundly mysterious and unsatisfactory than ever.

But more to the practical point is the truth so clearly intimated in Jesus' reply to this man, that if an equitable division of property among individuals were practicable and actually effected, it would not solve the problem for one single day so long as men's hearts were covetous and each was seeking to secure for himself all that was possible. The sun would not go down before some of these covetous men would again have more and some less than

their rightful share. On such a basis the infinite wisdom and power would be called into requisition every twenty-four hours to effect an individual redistribution of property. There are human tribunals which are makeshift expedients for settling such disputed issues according to some standard accepted and enforced by a majority of the grasping and contesting seekers after personal advantage. But the ethic of Jesus brings before the bar of a purified conscience, which stands above the whole unseemly scramble for rights, the very foundation principles on which the civil tribunals base their judgments. The conception of property which is embodied in the political and economic organization of society is ethically defective, and public administration based on this conception never has realized justice and never can.

What is, then, this defective conception of property? And over against it, what principle does Jesus set up? The notion of property which has long prevailed in the world is that it is something which a man "owns," that is, something which he has the right, within certain vague and shifting limits, to use as he pleases for his own gratification. Those limits are not clearly defined, but in general they are supposed to be found where another man's right to use his property according to his pleasure begins. Just where that right begins and ends men have never been able to determine with satisfaction. The line of de-

marcation is actually fixed by the relative strength of opposing individuals and groups, and is consequently always shifting. The most notable aspect of the situation, however, is that it is absolutely necessary to observe *some* limits in order that men may live together at all. The notion that a man's property is something that he has the right to use as he pleases does not and cannot afford a basis of human association. The basis of association is really the limitation imposed upon this right. The fact is that the sphere in which this conception and use of property can be scientifically justified becomes more and more contracted as our knowledge of social relation becomes more profound and exact, until it approximates very closely to the vanishing point. From the point of view of sociological ethics one is justified in doing as he pleases with his property only in so far as his pleasure coincides with the interests of the total group of which he is a member. It may be granted that Robinson Crusoe, before his man Friday appeared, had the right to do as he pleased with his property; but it must also be granted that under such condition the very word "property" ceased to have any meaning, since it is a social concept. The notion of property which underlies our political and judicial administration is, therefore, defective in the light of scientific sociology, which makes it apparent that property is a social product and must be administered in a social environment

which imposes limitations upon its use at every step.

This social conception of property runs parallel with the thought of Jesus; though it is not identical with His thought. The principle of Jesus is that ultimately and absolutely property belongs to God; men do not "own" it, and should not use it as they please, except on the condition that their pleasure is identical with God's purpose. God's purpose is the establishment of the Kingdom—the reign of loving righteousness, wherein all men are mutually stimulated and helped to the realization of their noblest capacities. A man's property is, therefore, a trust which he may not without sin administer for any purpose except the promotion of the well-being of his fellow-men, along with which his own well-being is realized. He is not authorized to expend any portion of it upon himself except as it may be necessary to maintain and develop his efficiency as a servant of God in the service of men. This principle is quite in harmony with the sociological doctrine that wealth is a social product and should be administered as such, which it adopts and fills with a positive religious content. The sociological doctrine is true, but is cold and comparatively destitute of the power to call into play the deeper emotions of human nature which are needed to give it dynamic efficiency. It needs to have breathed into it religious conviction and passion. Scientific men themselves are coming to

realize that in some way the scientific conception of social relations and, in particular, the scientific conception of property, must be converted into a sort of religion, must be harnessed to those profound instincts which have always been the springs of powerful and overmastering emotions, before it can grip and sway the wills of the masses of men and become effective as a social control. The doctrine of Jesus lifts the scientific conception at once on to the plane of religion, consecrates it and marries it to that mighty spiritual passion which alone has been found able to lift man above the limitations of his lower nature and expand his self-centred individuality into a genial consciousness of fellowship with humanity.

Now, this is the method of Jesus for securing an equitable distribution of material well-being among men. This mode of viewing wealth, this spiritual conception of life, must become prevalent in the minds of men, or of a sufficient number of them, at least, to give shape to the economic and legal organization of society. This method does not commend itself to many so-called "practical" men. It is too indirect and seems to postpone the day of equity to an infinitely distant time. It looks to them like a sidetracking of the whole enterprise, the involvement of the whole issue in a fog of mysticism which clear-eyed, hard-headed men of the modern world seek to avoid. Very well. What, then, is proposed in its stead? There are three programs offered:

First, it is proposed by the teaching of Social Science to lead men into the better way. Science will effect social regeneration. The defect in this program is that it proceeds upon the false assumption that men do wrong only because they do not know better, an assumption which is negatived by the experience of every human being every day that he lives. Knowledge is good, is indispensable. The man of the noblest motives may destroy himself and others through ignorance. By all means we must have science; but that is far from being sufficient. Knowledge directs, but it is feeling that impels. As indicated, scientific men are realizing more and more keenly the necessity of establishing a connection between their scientific conclusions, so convincing to the intellect and so ineffectual in practice, and the mighty dynamo of social emotion. Thus Professor Ross says: "There are some who hold that science can replace idealism in our system of motives. Now, it is well that all codes of requirement—legal, moral, religious—should be frequently overhauled by the sociologists so that we shall not encourage things hurtful to the common good, or discourage things agreeable to the common good. But in getting people to observe these rectified rules of social morality the truths of sociology are of little help. The *stimulus*, aye, there's the rub! It is easy to improve the *contents* of the moral code without improving its *grip*. . . . Open-eyed selfishness is better than

blind selfishness. But this does nothing to redeem man from the ape and the tiger in him. . . . The palm, then, must belong to that influence that goes to the root of man's badness and by giving him more interests and sympathies converts a narrow self into a broad self."

Second, it is proposed to develop a religion of humanity, leaving out the notion of a real, objective God. Science, they assume, and sometimes expressly declare, has rendered it impracticable to believe any longer in God, except as a mere idealization of the social group. God, we are told, has the same sort of reality as "Uncle Sam," and only that. The real spring of the religious enthusiasm of the future will be humanity. The enthusiasm for humanity must be developed into a religion of sufficient power to give dynamic efficiency to scientific concepts as the regenerators of society. Now, it lies beyond the scope of the present undertaking to go into the question whether it is practicable to establish a real religion for real men without a God who is as real as they are; but we venture to assert that it will be psychologically impossible for a man to experience a single thrill of genuine religious emotion the moment after his instincts as well as his intellect have been divested of the assumption that there is an objective, substantial reality corresponding to the idea of God. But apart from that, it looks like a "hope deferred which maketh the heart sick," if the inauguration of the pro-

gram of social justice must await the establishment and prevalence of a new religion which begins with the elimination of the one conviction which has been the soul of every religion that has yet arisen and spread among men, with the single exception of the paralyzing faith of Buddhism; and indeed, this could not become a popular religion except by including faith in a god. The proposition really is to take the religion of Jesus, cut the heart out of it, and then expect it thus mangled to breathe into scientific concepts the energy which will enable them to pervade and master human society. In one breath they tell us that science needs religion to make its knowledge effective; in the next breath they tell us that science has rendered impossible the continued belief in God as an objective, real Being, which belief alone has ever rendered a religion effective as a means of invigorating the human will. In a word, science can be rendered effective only by religion, which science itself renders ineffective.

A third proposition is that social justice must come as the result of a universal socialization of industry. There are two methods contemplated or proposed for securing this result. According to one, it is to be accomplished by the state. The organ of government is to be more and more completely democratized, *i. e.*, made immediately and thoroughly responsive to the will of the masses of the people; at the same time governmental

control over economic activities is to be extended until all capitalized industry shall be owned collectively and operated by the democratized state. Meanwhile the several governments of the world are to be brought into one organization, which will eliminate industrial competition between them. According to the second view, the universal socialization of industry must come as the inevitable issue of the historic conflict of classes. The labourers, who constitute the oppressed and exploited class, are to be united, disciplined in collective action until they shall become strong enough to take control of the world's industries and manage them. Naturally there is considerable indefiniteness as to how this vast scheme is to be worked out in detail, and a great diversity among those who forecast its development. But all of them expect that class-conflict will ultimately be abolished; that collective production and distribution will prevail; that the workers throughout the world will be organized into one co-operative system, and so competition between individuals, between industrial groups, and between nations will cease; that war will become an obsolete trait of a barbaric past.

These schemes are alluring in their magnificence. The organization of humanity into one vast co-operative system of workers is a consummation devoutly to be desired. The goal proposed in this program can hardly be objected to by any man of large vision and generous spirit. But we

must ask whether it can ever be obtained by the methods proposed. We shall not stop to dwell upon the question whether it will be possible for men to develop administrative genius equal to the task of organizing and controlling the industries of the world as a unitary system; whether it would be humanly possible to operate it without serious and interminable maladjustments which would be full of peril for all cultural as well as economic interests, and especially whether it would be practicable to do it when the administrators on whose shoulders such an unprecedented task would devolve would have to be selected by the masses of the people through universal and equal suffrage; whether, in a word, it is practicable to educate average humanity up to the point where ordinary people throughout the world would be capable of criticising intelligently the administration of an economic system so vast and so infinitely complicated.

But let us grant that the necessary ability of this kind may ultimately be developed. We have, to be sure, little ground to be pessimistic as to the potential administrative capacities of man. Results have been accomplished in the development of administrative talents among men which would have seemed impossible a hundred or two years ago. If one contemplates that administrative miracle, the British Empire, and remembers that it is based on popular suffrage; or if one considers that

a small group of men in America have in their hands the management of such industrial organizations as the oil and steel trusts, and the railway combination, and have brought these huge enterprises into co-operative relations with one another; and if one bears in mind, further, that these enterprises probably might be just as efficiently managed collectively on the basis of popular suffrage, he will have his confidence in this form of human capacity so strengthened that it will be difficult indeed to shake it.

Leaving aside, then, as not incapable of solution the problem growing out of the magnitude of the administrative task, a more serious question arises as to man's moral capacity for such an enterprise. The scheme does not presuppose any fundamental ethical change in human nature. It goes rather upon the assumption that the moral obliquity of man is the result of the social environment. Born and bred in a social system which is full of selfish competition and struggle, men are made selfish. In order to survive in such an environment they have to suppress their nobler, brotherly impulses and war against those whom they normally should and would help. The evil social order warps and distorts that which is naturally sound, healthful, upright. Therefore, it is the social order and not human nature that needs to be changed. It is this half-truth which constitutes the fatal error of this scheme of social redemption. True, a social environment which

is shot through and through with the struggle of selfish individual and group interests stimulates and develops the evil propensities of human nature. This fact I have sought to emphasize in other sections of this book, and unquestionably far more serious attention needs be given to this important matter; but, *per contra,* when one asks whence came this evil social order, the only possible answer is that it is the creation of this same human nature. An evil social system was not created by some outside power and imposed upon innocent, pure, loving men. The system is itself a creation of human nature. Somehow—and into this theological question this is not the time to go—*somehow* human nature got wrong at the beginning and produced this social system, against which the advocates of this scheme have brought such a severe and true indictment. The nature of man is responsible for the system, and the system goes on accentuating the perversity of the nature out of which it sprang. A well-founded objection lies equally against the theory that the system is good and only the nature needs to be changed, and the counter theory that the nature is good and only the system needs to be changed. Such a separation of the nature of man from the human environment is negatived both by science and by the ethic of Jesus.

The method of Jesus, then, is clearly differentiated from all these schemes of social regeneration; and yet it takes up into itself and fulfills

the essential truth of all of them. It is in agreement with the sociologists in their scientific analysis of social relations; but supplies what it lacks, a dynamic principle. It agrees with the ethical idealists in the passion for humanity; but supplies the only enduring fountain whence that passion can spring. It agrees with the socialists in their longing for a universal co-operative, brotherly organization of mankind; but declares that human nature as well as the social organization springing from it needs to be changed in order to realize this ideal, and addresses itself to the *whole* task instead of only one-half of it, which is impossible of accomplishment without the other.

Jesus does not touch the issue as to collective or individual administration of wealth. He deals with the matter more fundamentally. The root of the whole trouble is that men misconceive the value and use of wealth in the scheme of life and their proper relation to it. When once men can come to perceive that wealth is not owned by man at all; that there is none of it which he has the right to do with as he pleases; that it belongs to God, and must be used in God's service; that it must not be used for any purpose except the building up of all men in the higher possibilities of life—when once this conception of wealth is accepted by men in good faith it will be a comparatively easy matter to determine as to the best policy of administering it. The respective merits

and demerits of private ownership and of collective ownership can then be considered with calmness and judicial fairness. The question now can hardly be broached without arousing the most violent selfish passions of human nature; because, first, men feel toward wealth as if it were in itself the essential value; and second, because they think of it as their property, exclusively their *own,* some small fractions of which they may devote to the public good if they prefer, but all of which they have the right to devote to their own enjoyment, while against this use of it other men either individually or collectively can make no legitimate protest. And so long as this feeling about wealth prevails in the hearts of men it will never be possible to reach an amicable arrangement for its administration. Under any conceivable scheme of social organization wealth thus conceived would continue to be a bone of contention, and in some way or other the strong men would secure an inequitable share of material enjoyment. When the doctrine of Jesus is really accepted the question as to what method of administering wealth will best subserve the purposes of the Kingdom can be discussed and determined without beclouding the visions of men with selfish passion, because their affections will have been detached from the worship of it and attached to the higher ends to which it should ever be subordinated as a means. So long as men worship wealth, or so long as they over-value the sensuous satisfactions

which wealth affords, an equitable distribution of material well-being will be impossible.

The scheme of Jesus is the really practicable one; and if the orthodox Christians, the scientific sociologists, the ethical idealists, the socialists, and all others of whatever persuasion or name, who wish to see justice prevail among men, would with complete devotion join hands in promoting the gospel of the Kingdom, the approximate realization of the glorious ideal would be brought so near that children now in their mothers' arms would live to see the most profound and beneficent change in social life that has taken place in the whole history of mankind.

CHAPTER IV

THE FAMILY

The family is the only institution to which Jesus made any definite application of His principles; and as to this His recorded words are few and relate principally to a particular phase of the general problem. This particular phase is not discussed at length. His most extended remarks were called forth by a specific question which He answered, and in answering which He made reference to certain practices current among the people represented by the questioners. One could wish that He had gone into the subject more fully and expressed Himself as to aspects of it which now so urgently confront us. But that was not His way. We need again to be reminded that He did not undertake the detailed solution of social problems; and with a clearer comprehension of the nature of the Kingdom and the method of its realization, the wisdom of His course becomes more apparent. Situations change; institutions undergo modifications; social problems assume different forms. Ethical *principles* remain the same from age to age; but ethical *rules*, which are the applications of principles to particular situations or types of situations, may vary for the very reason that the principles do not change.

But if His remarks as to the family were brief, they were very much to the point and very emphatic.[1] The various reports of this conversation recorded in the three Gospels may be noted, though it is doubtful if any significant or safe conclusions can be based upon these variations. In Matthew the matter is referred to twice; once without any reference to the questioning of the Pharisees. In the first passage it is declared that a man who puts away his wife, except for fornication, *causes* her to commit adultery; in the second, if he puts her away (except for fornication) and marries another, *he* commits adultery. In Mark and Luke the statement is made without qualification that a man who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; while Matthew introduces the qualifying clause, "except for the cause of fornication." Matthew and Luke add that whoever marries the divorced woman commits adultery. Mark adds that the woman who puts away her husband and marries another commits adultery. If all the statements be considered as complementary to one another and be combined into one, we have it declared—first, that marriage should be indissoluble except for one cause; that to divorce one's wife, except for fornication, causes her to commit adultery—this statement apparently supposes the remarriage of the divorced wife; third, that to divorce one's wife, save for the one cause, and to marry another

[1] Matthew 5:31, 32; 19:3-9; Mark 10:2-12; Luke 16:18.

is to commit adultery; fourth, that to divorce one's husband and to marry another is to commit adultery. It is not expressly stated, but may be fairly assumed, that the qualifying condition, "except for fornication," would apply in the latter case also; unless one eliminates it altogether as an unauthourized addition to the words of Jesus, as some do. This is based upon the supposition that it is more probable that one evangelist would add this phrase to the words of Jesus than that the other two would omit it. But this is not convincing.

Now, such a combination of the passages yields a doctrine of the marital relation which, while specific and emphatic upon certain points, manifestly does not determine all the issues that may and do arise. In the first place, it is not decisive as to the question concerning the moral right of the innocent party to remarry in the case of a divorce based on the ground of fornication. According to the statement in Mark and Luke, remarriage would seem to be absolutely forbidden; but if Matthew's qualifying condition be understood, the question as to the privilege of remarriage for the innocent party under such circumstances is not determined. In the second place, fornication alone is mentioned as the ground which justifies divorce. If the word be taken in its strict meaning, as a sexual offense committed before marriage, then the inference would be that sexual unfaithfulness after marriage—that is,

adultery—would not constitute a justifying cause for divorce; and the words "fornication" and "adultery" are so used here in close connection with one another as to make the impression that the distinction between them was present in the mind of Jesus. And yet it is hardly conceivable that He meant to take the position that the discovery that illicit sexual relations had existed before marriage would constitute a permissible ground of divorce while the commission of such an offense after marriage would not. The conclusion, then, is irresistible; either that Jesus used the word "fornication" in a general and indefinite sense as inclusive of all illicit sexual acts, whether committed before or after marriage, or that He did not intend to specify every possible ground that would justify divorce. The probability is strongly in favour of the former alternative, that fornication is here used in a general sense and is to be understood as having reference to any sexual violation of the marriage compact. It is apparent, however, that these passages, although explicit on certain points, leave some aspects of the problem unsettled. The most devout and competent commentators, therefore, have never been able to reach unanimity as to some important questions in the interpretation of these passages.

But if all the issues as to divorce which arise are not definitely settled for the Christian conscience, the fundamental ones are. There can be

no doubt at all that Jesus placed a heavy emphasis upon the sacredness of the marriage tie, and it is practically certain that He recognized but one cause for divorce—namely, the act which is itself a severance of the marital bond. He also forbids with clear and unmistakable emphasis the remarriage of the guilty party. As before said, there is a reasonable doubt whether this prohibition applies to the innocent party. The probability is that it does, but there seems to be a sufficient lack of definiteness as to this issue to exclude dogmatism and intolerance.

Jesus discussed marriage as a religious institution. He contemplated social life from the religious point of view, and invested it with religious meaning. He was seeking to establish the Kingdom of God, an organization of human life in accordance with the will of God. In His utterances as to marriage, therefore, He appealed immediately to the divine purpose underlying the institution. That purpose is written in the constitution of human nature; and, as He interpreted it, calls for the lifelong union of one man with one woman. Marriage is an ordinance of God. Its ultimate sanction is the divine will. To make of it a transient connection of a man and woman, a mere convenience for the gratification of individual impulses and passions, is a desecration, a sin. It cannot be dissolved without sin. "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." The sin of adultery *ipso facto* dissolves

it, because it is fundamentally a physical union of a man and a woman for the purpose of procreation; and adultery is a breach of the union by one of the persons who are sacredly pledged to each other in this function. Divorce is permissible under such circumstances because it is nothing more than a public social recognition of the accomplished rupture of the bond.

But to Jesus the procreative purpose for which marriage primarily exists is a very sacred one. Out of it spring the fundamental relations which human beings sustain to one another—parenthood, childhood, brotherhood—around which gather the tenderest of natural sentiments and which are capable of becoming the bearers of those higher spiritual meanings which He desired to put into all the relations of men. The family is, so to speak, the mould in which His conception of the Kingdom of God is cast. By making fatherhood and brotherhood the basal ideas in His doctrine of the Kingdom He gave to the family the highest possible consecration. He declared Himself to be the Son of the Eternal Father. His mission was to reveal the Father and to bring men into a filial attitude toward God; to establish between God and man the relationship of fatherhood and sonship. Men are thus brought into the realization of a brotherhood with one another which is unspeakably more intimate and vital than a mere community of physical life. These terms—father-

hood, sonship, brotherhood—can have no meaning apart from pure family life. The pure family life is the human model, so to speak, of the spiritual universe as He sought to organize it. If the family be desecrated and degraded, those relationships in terms of which He expresses the Kingdom are emptied of their meaning. The family, then, is a sort of preparatory school for the Kingdom. In the family experiences men form those primary concepts of human relations which He expands into spiritual meanings. It is, therefore, vitally related to the progress of the Kingdom, and, from the point of view of Jesus, is the most important and precious of human institutions. Doubtless that is the reason why He did for the family what He did for no other existing institution—paused, in the midst of His work of unfolding the fundamental principles of life, to make a specific application of His principles to it, and thus fixed it definitely as an essential factor in that order of human society which was ultimately to be constituted in accordance with His ideals.

But the institution of marriage, while it has religious sanction and interpretation, is so related to the social life that it must come under the control of the community. It has its foundation in the physiological constitution of human beings; its primary purpose is the reproduction or multiplication of the species. But with human beings this biological function is performed on the *moral*

level of life; and it is this fact which gives to the institution of marriage its peculiar character and forever distinguishes it from the mating of animals. As marriage involves, besides the physiological relation, moral relations of the most important and intimate character, it is of necessity subject to moral sanction and social control. It is a social as well as a biological institution; and if logically the biological function is primary, in the order of importance the social is of equal or superior value. Through it society is perpetuated; but society, it should be remembered, is more than a mere aggregation of physical beings; it is a moral order. The task devolved upon the family, therefore, is not merely to bring human beings into physical existence, but to initiate them into a moral and social world. It stands at the strategic point in the social process. It is pivotal. In it society is renewing itself. Consequently, the family is the most vital institution in society. To say that this supreme function should be exempted from social control, that men should be permitted to mate and propagate under the domination of sexual impulse alone, is equivalent to saying that the social group should abdicate control over the processes of its own perpetuation and development. The mating of men and women is *par excellence* a social act. It is not at all a mere matter of individual attractions and repulsions. Those who marry assume definite obligations to one another, but fundamentally the obligation assumed

is to society, which has the right, therefore, to define the conditions of entrance into this relation, the character of the obligations it involves, and the conditions on which it may be disrupted. Out of it grow some of the most important questions of social policy. What conditions ought society to impose upon those who seek to enter into this relationship? Manifestly, the answer to this question at any given time will be determined by two considerations, the actual conditions of social life and the ideal which is guiding society in its adjustments.

The institution of the family dates from the beginning of human society. It has varied greatly in form with the changing conditions in social development, because it is so intimately and inextricably linked up with the whole organization of life. The social history of man has been a vast process of experimentation in methods and forms of associated life. Three general forms of family life have been pretty thoroughly tried out—monogamy, polyandry, and polygamy. Since the epoch-making work of Westermarck, the theory of original promiscuity in sexual relations has been for the most part abandoned by ethnologists and sociologists. Through many variations, reactions and confusions, the general and on the whole steady trend has been toward monogamy as the type of conjugal relation which human experience has found the most satisfactory and promotive of social progress. On the whole, also,

the trend has been toward the permanency of the relation, though this trend has perhaps been less obvious and less steady than that toward monogamy. Sometimes the tendency has seemed to be, and doubtless has been, in the direction of instability and laxity. Such a time was that in which Jesus lived; and such a time is this in which we live. Marital ties were unusually lax then, and the laxity now is so great as to cause profound concern to all thoughtful people. It is probably true, however, that at such times the increasing laxity of the conjugal tie coincides with a general instability in the whole organized life of society. There come periods when all institutional life becomes relatively unstable. They are called periods of transition. All periods are transitional, because absolute equilibrium never exists in a living organism, biological or social; but at times the transition is much more rapid than at others. At such epochs new forces are coming into play; there is a general redistribution of social energy; reorganization is going on at an unwonted pace everywhere, accompanied by an inevitable disorganization of existing structures. All institutions will then be more or less affected, but not all equally. *The reorganizing process is always primarily concerned with or related to one or more institutions as centers of change; and other institutions will be more or less profoundly affected in proportion as they are more or less closely related to that group of institutions with*

which the process of change is primarily concerned and from which as a centre it radiates over the general field of social relations.

In studying the problem of the family it is important to bear in mind the principle which we have just stressed. In the time of Jesus the centre of change was in the political organization —the incorporation of practically all people in one vast political empire. This has previously been discussed and need not be dwelt upon here. The organization of society in our time is enormously more complex than any that ever before existed; and in this wonderful transitional epoch it is possible to locate at least two definite centres of disturbance and reorganization, which are doubtless closely related and directly react upon one another, but neither of which is genetically dependent upon the other. One is in the field of science, and the other in the field of economic life.

The marvelous development of science has profoundly modified our general modes of thinking and our views of the world. And this is true not alone of those who have devoted themselves to scientific investigation. Science has become a sort of atmospheric influence and affects the mental attitude of the great multitude. The typical man of this age approaches the great questions of life and deals with them in a way strikingly different from that in which men generally did in ancient and mediæval times. That superficiality has to a great extent characterized the scientific movement

and method, especially in its more popular phases, is obvious. This perhaps was inevitable; and there is good reason to believe that it will be temporary. But certainly the immediate effect has been a widespread uncertainty as to the fundamental verities of the Christian faith and a general lightening of the religious sanctions. Ecclesiastical authority, in particular, has been so seriously undermined that in all the most advanced societies it has either entirely collapsed or is tottering to its fall. How this has affected the family is obvious. During the Middle Age the church took over from the state the control of the institution of marriage. This took place at a time when the organization of the Roman state was in process of dissolution and the church was the only institution left that was equal to the task of integrating society. Into that remarkable history there is neither time nor space in this discussion to go; but the transference took place, and under the dominance of the church divorce was absolutely prohibited and made a sin. Now the functions of the church are being restricted; the state is assuming again the control of marriage; and the general lightening of the religious sanction of conduct, along with the decline of the power of the church as an external authority, is one of the influences that have worked toward the present instability of the family.

Perhaps an even more powerful and pervasive influence in the same direction has emanated from

the marvelous industrial development which has taken place in the last one hundred and fifty years. It is only with difficulty that a man living now can realize how profoundly the whole social organization has been modified by that development. If, by imagination, one transports himself back into the era that preceded the great industrial revolution of the eighteenth century, he will find himself in a very different world. The whole structure of society has since then undergone change. It has become enormously more complex than it was. This has tended to specialize, individualize the population; and this has been one of the most potent of the causes that have democratized government and spread the spirit of individual liberty throughout all the relations of men. Years ago Sir Henry Maine pointed out the significant fact that in modern life a very great number of the relations in which persons stand with one another have come to rest on the basis of *contract,* whereas in former times they rested on the basis of *status.* That is, formerly the relations in which persons stood were determined for them; they were born into them, and thought little of changing them; while now they enter into them voluntarily. Certainly the change in this respect has been remarkable, and it has been due in no small measure to the industrial transformation.

Another effect has been the wholesale secularization of life. The last hundred years, to

speak in round numbers, has been supremely characterized by mechanical inventions and their widespread application. The great majority of men have been prevailingly absorbed in the extension of their control over and utilization of natural forces, and in reaping the material rewards of their increasing mastery over nature. It has become a mighty passion, turning in the direction of secular industry a stupendous volume of human energy. Religious contemplation and theological speculation which once gave occupation to the majority of minds have almost become "lost arts" for most men. Their mental interests and energies are drained off into channels of business activity. This has powerfully reinforced the influences which emanate from the field of science and which have worked toward the weakening of ecclesiastical authority and of religious sanctions in general. Religion has not been driven from the field. Far from it. But religious faith where it has survived has been "individualized" and more or less "rationalized." People think for themselves in this sphere as well as in others; perhaps even more freely than in other matters; and accept as much or as little of the religious dogmas as they see fit. In contributing to this blurring of religious conviction and destruction of organized religious control, modern industrialism has aided greatly in removing or seriously crippling the one authourity which forbade the disruption of the conjugal tie.

Industrialism has negatively contributed to the instability of the family by removing in large part another cohesive influence which has been operative since the beginning of society. A notable aspect of the industrial development has been a wholesale transference of economic activities from the home to outside organizations. This process has not attracted as much attention as its importance deserves. Only a little thought is required to disclose its important bearing upon the structure and permanence of the family. The home or household of former times was an industrial institution of no mean proportions. Many very important economic activities were carried on in the home even a hundred years ago; and the further back one looks, the more one finds economic production centred in the household. At the present time in the cities and towns the home has almost entirely ceased to be the location of any productive economic activity; and in the rural districts the trend is in the same direction, though doubtless the rural home can never be so completely changed in this respect as the city home has been.

Some economists maintain that while productive industry has been transferred from the home, the home still has a most important economic function to perform in the control of consumption, over which it is the especial privilege and task of the wife to preside. This is true, and apparently must continue to be true in some

measure. But it is worthy of note that the practice of living in flats, boarding-houses and hotels, which is so rapidly increasing in the large communities, tends to reduce even this to a minimum. The elimination of the economic occupations from the home removes one of the factors that greatly contributed to the permanency of the conjugal bond. The breaking up of a family now does not involve so serious an upsetting of the economic life of the parties as it formerly did.

The influence of industrialism has been positive as well as negative. It has positively contributed to the instability of the family in several ways. In the first place, the change in the industrial character of the household has left less for women to do in the home, in all the strata of society. Among the rich it leads naturally to the luxurious idleness, the ennui and the discontent of women; and what more natural than that one whose life is so splendidly devoid of all imperative tasks, who is without any real occupation except the passive one of being pampered and petted, should become whimsical, capricious and impatient of all binding obligations and fall a victim to the temptation to engage in exciting—because illicit—intrigues? It would be a cruel slander to intimate that all rich women do thus degenerate. There may be found among them many of the best and purest characters, loyal wives and mothers who devote their surplus time and money to the service of humanity. But it is nevertheless true that a

life of wealth and leisure places a severe strain upon the character, to which many succumb. It is not at all unnatural that among the "four hundred" marital fidelity is not highly prized.

The removal of these occupations from the home affects the women of the middle class in a different way. It enlarges their leisure; but, being without the means of luxurious self-indulgence, they are more likely to utilize the time in self-culture, in literary labour, or in some form of associative work for civic improvement. Directly this does not impair the stability of the family, but indirectly it may have that tendency. It promotes the independence and self-assertion of women; it deepens their consciousness of individual personality and of personal right, and renders them less tolerant of male dereliction, less submissive to abuse, less patient of neglect, less willing to grant to men the right to play fast and loose with marriage vows. In this way it may and probably does tend to increase the number of separations; and yet we can hardly question that this is really a helpful and encouraging aspect of this problematical situation.

At the lower end of the economic scale the disintegrating effect upon the home is quite as manifest as at the upper, and is equally as deplorable. The vast increase of wealth has raised the standard of living for all classes. Especially in the middle and upper strata of the population has the standard been very greatly raised, be-

cause incomes have so largely increased. This reacts naturally to raise the level of *desires* among the labouring people; but wages have been by no means proportionately raised. The disparity between the labouring man's desires and his income has greatly increased beyond what it used to be. Meanwhile prices have risen phenomenally in recent years. The net result is a profound and universal discontent in that class of the population. This discontent reacts hurtfully upon the home life, becomes a source of bad temper and irritation in the family life, and weakens the marital bonds. At the same time the wife under the economic pressure often follows the industry which once was carried on in the home into the factory, whither it has been transferred; and this disorganizes the domestic life and adds to the confusion and dissatisfaction. There is little wonder that among people who are thus situated separations, desertions and divorces are multiplying.

Again, the trend toward putting all the relations of men upon a contractual basis has extended to marriage. Under the dominance of this tendency, coupled with the individualistic conception of life which has become so general, multitudes of people have come to regard marriage as simply a contract between two individuals. Why, then, should it not be dissolved at the will of the contracting parties? When other contracts become

irksome or unprofitable to those who have entered into them, they may be annulled. Or when one of the parties fails to observe his obligations assumed in a compact, legal provisions are made for the injured party to obtain relief or redress. Why, these people reason, should not the marriage contract be subject to the same principle?

Furthermore, these modern ideas, which, if they have not originated in the scientific and industrial movements, have certainly been powerfully promoted by them, have affected women as well as men. Women, too, have become "individualized" and are claiming personal rights on a parity with men. Somewhat more slowly, but not less surely, her relations in society are being transferred from the basis of status to the basis of free contract. She is demanding personal rights. She is holding the husband to a performance of the marital contract with increasing strictness, as he has always held her. The wife no longer tolerates things which she used to *have* to tolerate; and there is no aspect of the present problem of the family more notable than the fact that almost exactly two-thirds of the divorces obtained to-day are sought by wives. The double standard of conjugal fidelity cannot much longer stand the increasing strain upon it. It is hopelessly discredited. It dies hard, but it dies. This will be so excellent a result of the tendencies now going on that one may well question whether

it will not be an ample compensation for all the confusion and moral dangers of the present disturbances.

It is apparent, then, that the causes which have brought about the present laxity as to divorce and the instability of family life are deeply rooted in social conditions. Thoughtful observers of our social life have been profoundly concerned, and the not unnatural impulse was to turn to restrictive or prohibitive legislation as a means of stemming the tide. Since the state has resumed control of marriage, let it take a position with regard to it similar to that which the church took when the control was in its hands. In response to this demand the state has for some decades been steadily restricting the grounds on which divorce may be obtained and, in general, trying to rivet more tightly the marriage bond. But despite this attitude of the state, the divorce rate has steadily and rapidly increased; and, as before noted, two-thirds of the legal separations have been granted at the request of wives. The conviction is growing that restrictive legislation fails to meet the situation. It doubtless has some value. It at least has some educational value as a social protest, but it clearly is only to a limited extent effective. Nothing will be effective except a remedy which reaches to the sources of the trouble. How should we, then, proceed to avert the dangers that threaten the family, and lift the

institution to a higher level than it has ever occupied?

Before seeking to determine specifically what the effective remedy must be, let us ask whether the situation is really worse than it was in the days when, under the domination of the Roman Church, divorce was absolutely forbidden. The real value of the family is conserved not by a merely formal maintenance of the marriage tie as indissoluble; it lies rather in the real observance of the obligations which the marriage bond imposes. The great interests intended to be conserved by the conjugal relation are three: first, the moral discipline of the husband and wife, who in living together in such intimacy are called upon to exercise a high degree of self-control, to practice the subordination of egoistic impulses and consideration for one another. Second, sexual purity. It was clear ethical insight which connected together the law of sexual purity and the inviolability of the marriage bond.[1] The institution of marriage affords the only proper method of satisfying the sexual impulse while restricting it to its proper function in the propagation of the race. In no other way can this powerful impulse be at once gratified and kept under the control of moral law. Third and chiefly, procreation and the proper physical and moral care of children. Now, none of these three great interests

[1] Matthew 5:27-32.

can be secured by a merely formal maintenance of the husband-wife relation. And the truth of this proposition has been abundantly demonstrated during the period when divorce was absolutely forbidden. For centuries the Roman Church prohibited the separation of husband and wife, and does so yet in those lands where it maintains its control over marriage. But under such conditions sexual laxity and the birth of illegitimate children have prevailed to a scandalous extent. The marital union has been rigidly maintained in form, but apparently without securing at all the great ethical and social interests which that union is intended to promote. In this matter mere formalism is as pernicious as in other great ethical and religious concerns. Emphasis upon the *form* of conduct is often joined with the neglect of its ethical meaning. Emphasis upon the form of a relation too often diverts attention from its ethical content and misleads people into a false sense of having secured a great moral interest at the very time that it is sacrificed. We know very well that this was not the way of Jesus. Upon this Pharisaic method He pronounced His most severe denunciations. What He enjoined was not a merely formal, but a real inviolability of the marriage bond.

The question, then, recurs, How shall we avert the dangers that menace the family and lift this precious institution to the level on which Jesus placed it in His teaching? Thanks to modern

social science, we have come to realize that society is a unity of interrelated, interdependent functions. In some sense of the word, it is an organism. If there is maladjustment or, if you please, disease in one of the most important social organs, the activity of the other organs will be disturbed. We have seen that two great institutions or groups of institutions—the religious and the economic—with which the family has stood in close relations are very much disturbed. And it may be safely maintained that so long as there is serious disorder in those important spheres it will be reflected in an unhealthful state of the family institution. To a large extent, certainly, the instability of the family is a symptom of trouble in the religious and economic spheres of life. In trying to cure the animal organism, the treatment of symptoms is no longer regarded as good therapeutics; and the same principle is applicable to the social organism. To make the thought clear, let us compare the economic functions of society to the group of alimentary functions in the human body; and the religious to the respiratory functions, to which it bears a closer likeness than any other biological process; and the family, to the heart. Of course, these are remote and crude resemblances, and others just as exact might be suggested. But they serve to give concreteness to the thought. If, then, the breathing and feeding functions of the body are very much out of order, the action of the heart will be much

disturbed, and no kind or amount of medicine intended to correct its action will give genuine relief. "Treat the parts fundamentally affected," advises the physician, and the advice should be passed on to the social reformers. Especially is it applicable in this matter.

Our fundamental social disorders to-day are religious and economic. The belief that life is essentially religious in its significance has been weakened; hence the conviction that the order of the universe is moral has been blurred. We need, therefore, a renewal of religious faith in harmony with the results of science. The head and the heart of the modern world need to be reconciled in a broader and higher conception of the universe in order that the conscience may be relieved of its confusion and rendered more efficient in its control of individualistic impulses. This religious faith can never, it seems certain, be organized again into a form of external authority. The law of the Lord must be written in the hearts of the people rather than in a collection of ecclesiastical canons. On the other hand, the economic system must be reorganized as a part of this moral order of the world so as to correct its enormous injustices and obviate its innumerable practical evils. As these two great processes—the rejuvenation of religious faith and the moralizing of the economic order—go on, the institution of the family, in which the normal instincts of men have always perceived

the most precious of our social assets, will become more stable and permanent as the indispensable agency through which society may conserve its most sacred treasures and hand them down enhanced to the coming generations.

It is evident, then, that the safeguarding and higher consecration of the family depends upon the general progress of the Kingdom of God toward its earthly goal, a transformed social order. The ideal of Jesus for marriage cannot be realized except as His ideal of society is realized. It is not possible to realize His ideal in one institution while other institutions which are closely linked with it in a social system are dominated wholly or in part by a contrary ideal. To be sure, as is implied in what has already been said, the social advance does not proceed evenly all along the line. Progress may and usually does go on in one institution or group of institutions while others lag for a time. The movement may be now chiefly in one and now chiefly in another department of life. A column of troops on dress parade may keep step faultlessly and march over the parade ground in an absolutely straight line; but that same column, as they move forward in a line of battle over broken ground, through open field and forest and thicket, will not be able to maintain such accuracy of concerted movement. The line will be a wavering one, though there may be no wavering in the stout hearts of the men. But it would be disastrous for the general unity of

the line to be broken; those who have no physical obstacles to overcome must not advance too far beyond those who are retarded. So in social progress one institution cannot advance far ahead of the general line of forward movement. To attempt by legislative enactment to bring one institution up to the ideal standard while interrelated institutions are left standing upon an entirely different basis is to court failure; and especially is it futile to try to correct by legislation the disorders in one institution which demonstrably result from maladjustments in others. It is universally conceded that it is not wise to make legal statutes of perfect ideals; and the practical considerations which forbid this are doubly weighty against singling out one institution for such treatment apart from the rest.

Such a method proceeds upon two false assumptions—first, that perfect ideals can be realized at a stroke by legislation; second, that institutions are not interrelated in a unitary system of life. This does not mean that legislation is of no value in the struggle for social ideals. Civil laws should embody relative or approximate ideals—that is, ideals up to the level of which it is possible at a given time to bring the average of social action. The reformers of a given group, being inextricably bound to the backward masses in a system of social life, must not hope to embody at once their highest ideals in the laws which control the action of the whole group, but only

by slow degrees as the average ethical standard of life is elevated. It would not be wise to enact the principles of the Kingdom of God as civil statutes; certainly it would be absurd at the present stage of social progress. Would it not be just as ill-advised to seek by statute to realize one of that group of perfect ideals set forth in the teachings of Jesus, leaving all the rest of the social life on a distinctly lower level?

It is doubtless wise to make the divorce laws more stringent; but it is the growing conviction of those who bring to the study of this problem the deepest understanding of social science that legislation will be more effective if aimed, not so much at making divorce impossible, as at preventing the marriage of persons whose union must prove a misfortune to themselves and to society. Never in the history of the world was there so little control as now exercised over the making of the marriage contract. The freedom of individuals to enter at their own will into this most important relationship is, after a very early period of their lives, almost without restriction. In early society certain customs, having the force of law, prescribed the group within which young people were permitted to seek their mates; and the individual selection within these limits was controlled by parents or the elders of the kinship-group. With many modifications, some form of social control over the formation of the marriage tie has prevailed down to quite recent times.

But of late, the tendency has been toward absolute laxity in this respect. This is, in fact, a more remarkable, exceptional and dangerous aspect of the present situation than the laxity as to the dissolution of the tie. Certainly the forms of social control formerly exercised over the right to marry are not suited to the conditions of modern life; but that only imposes the necessity of finding forms of control that are suitable, and this is the phase of the situation which to-day calls most loudly for wise legislation. If no control is exercised over the formation of marital unions, the prohibition of their dissolution only renders permanent those marriages which are violations of every law of God as written in the biological and ethical nature of man. Such marriages are at once social shames and religious shams, and simply to perpetuate them is no remedy for the evil. We are more in need of marriage laws than of divorce laws. In view of the astounding laxity with which multitudes of persons are permitted to marry who are manifestly unfit, physically, mentally and morally, to live together in holy wedlock and to become parents, is it not inevitable that under the stress of the powerful disintegrating forces above described the permanency of the family institution should seem to be imperiled and that the "divorce mills" should be kept running over time?

To sum up: If the institution of the family

is to be at once safeguarded and established upon a firmer and higher basis than ever, the three lines along which the most effective work must be done are:

First, the reinvigoration of religious faith, which has been so seriously devitalized by reason of a false conception of the implications of modern science. The notion that science has rendered untenable a religious conception of the world has become widespread, but is already beginning to weaken in the very centres from which it radiated in the beginning. There is a wide and inviting field open here for the work of constructive thinkers, who know how to correlate the results of science and the scientific spirit with a positive religious faith. Such a work is basal, not only in the interests of the particular institution now under consideration, but for the conservation and promotion of all social interests.

Second, the establishment of a wise and effective public control not only over the breaking of the marriage tie, but more particularly over its formation; so that those who are afflicted with the so-called "social diseases," the insane, the confirmed neurotics, etc., may be, in mercy to themselves and in justice to society, saved from the terrible mistake of marriage, a mistake which, knowingly committed, might better be called a crime. With the progress of science we shall be able to determine better and better just what re-

striction should be placed upon those who seek to enter into this relationship and perform this high social and religious function.

Third, the establishment of fairer economic conditions. Twice in the course of this chapter the fact has been noted that the only healthful aspect of the present tendency is seen in the so-called "middle classes." That is extremely significant. The really pathological conditions are to be found mostly among those who, at one end of the economic scale, are lifted above the standard of normal living and those who, at the other end of the scale, are depressed below the standard of normal living. True progress lies in reducing these extremes. We should, so to speak, rid our society of the scum and the dregs. As fast as we can approximate a normal standard of living for all classes of the population—that is, as fast as we can attain to an equitable distribution of wealth—just so fast will we bring health to the family institution, as well as to all the other institutions of society. And as we do so we will be approaching the realization of the ideal of Jesus for the family—the permanent and inviolable union of one man and one woman in the bonds of a genuine, abiding, intelligent and patient love, laying in mutual sacrifice and fidelity the foundations of a home, the most beautiful and precious of human institutions and the best symbol of the universe organized according to the will of God.

CHAPTER V

THE CHILDREN

The increased psychological and sociological interest in the child, which is one of the most notable aspects of present-day life, should lead us to a re-study of the passages which record the attitude and words of Jesus with reference to children.[1] It will be noted that these passages fall into two groups. The first group record the act and utterances of Jesus which were called forth by the ambitious contest of the disciples for the chief place in the prospective Kingdom. The second record His acts and utterances called forth by their rebuke of the parents who brought their children to receive His blessing. It will be noted also that these incidents were recorded in all of the Synoptics, but not by John. John's Gospel, it seems, was written not only as a record, but as an argument to sustain a definite thesis, and these incidents did not seem to be pertinent to that purpose.

The commentators are not agreed as to the precise significance of these passages. One group of interpreters understand that Jesus, after taking the child and using it as the example of the

[1] Matthew 18:1-14; Mark 9:33-37; Luke 9:46-48, and Matthew 19:13-15; Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-17.

mental attitude which it was necessary for those who would become His disciples to acquire, makes no further reference to the child itself, but proceeds to speak concerning the disciples who are typified by the child. The words, "Whoso will receive one such little child in my name," etc., and "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones," refer to the disciples who have the childlike spirit. Even the specific words of Luke, "Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me," are supposed to refer to the child only in its representative capacity, and really to mean the disciples who are represented by it. The words, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones," and "Even so, it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish," are also supposed to refer to the disciples and not to the little children themselves. In short, the whole discourse based upon this incident, after the reference to the child as a concrete example of the child-attitude, is construed as having reference to the disciples and not to the children. Accordingly we do not have in these passages a lesson as to the proper Christian attitude toward children, but as to the proper attitude toward childlike Christians. At any rate, according to this construction, whatever teaching there may be concerning the proper attitude toward children as children, it is only inferential and incidental and nowise central in the meaning of the passages.

Another interpretation given by a smaller group of commentators is that the children are referred to throughout the discourse, and that Jesus therein sets forth the spiritual condition and significance of the child and the proper attitude of His followers toward children; while incidentally and inferentially the words include in their application all those who have the childlike disposition. Those who maintain this interpretation of the passages usually understand them to teach that the children are really in the Kingdom of God; indeed, may be considered as the typical members of the Kingdom, since they are by nature what adults must *become* by repentance and conversion. The problem, therefore, is to keep the children in the Kingdom; to prevent their *per*version, which would render necessary their *con*version.

Neither of these views seems to me satisfactory. Both seem to be coloured too much by certain theological presuppositions, and theological presuppositions are not good glasses through which to see the simple but profound meaning of Jesus. Let us consider each interpretation somewhat in detail.

To the latter only a few lines need be devoted. It may be accepted in so far as it construes the discourse as referring all the way through primarily to children, and as setting forth the general religious significance of children and the proper Christian attitude toward them. Later on

the reasons for accepting this view will be stated and elaborated. But this group of interpreters seem to me to be in error in so far as they represent Jesus as teaching that children are naturally, by birth, citizens of the Kingdom of God. In the first place, there is nothing in His language which necessarily or even probably implies this doctrine as to the natural religious status of the child. All that His words can be construed as meaning without reading into them a theological significance foreign to His purpose in uttering them, is that the openness, teachableness and freedom from selfish ambition which characterize the mind of the normal child are antecedent conditions of entrance into His Kingdom and of attaining to a position of great influence in it. The grown-up people with whom He was dealing were not open, were not teachable; their minds were preoccupied with prejudices and presuppositions—false views of life, of God, of the Kingdom of God. Their ideals were wrong. They were thus inaccessible to His truth. Therefore, they must get rid of these mental obstructions which rendered their souls opaque to the light of His teaching. Jesus had profound psychological insight. He perceived a fact which modern psychology has emphasized as of great importance; to-wit, that the mental system which has been organized and crystallized in an adult mind renders that mind almost inaccessible to radically new truths; quite inaccessible, indeed, without a mental revolution.

He came teaching truths that were so profound, so radical, and, to His adult hearers, so new and revolutionary that nothing short of a mental overturning, a conversion, a turning back to the simplicity and teachableness of the child would make it possible for them to apprehend and appropriate His truth and enter into the Kingdom He was organizing. The commentators are quite right who insist that the phrase, "be converted," is not to be understood in the technical or theological, but in the psychological sense, as the emptying of the mind of the false views which preoccupied and filled it, a reversion to the mental attitude of children—an attitude which, it is very clearly implied, His disciples must not only acquire but maintain, if, after they have entered the Kingdom, they are to make continuous progress in the spiritual life. These words, indeed, constitute a solemn warning against mental crystallization, a warning which has been echoed with mighty emphasis by the modern science of the soul. As to the status of children, they mean nothing more or less than that the children are normally in a mental attitude which renders them easily accessible to His truths and the influence of His personality, a state of mind which is necessary as a psychological condition of entrance into the Kingdom.

But what is the nature of that Kingdom and by what process does one actually become a member of it? These questions are not an-

swered in these passages. We must look elsewhere for their answer. To insist on finding their answer here is simply to read into these words a preconceived theological doctrine which they do not yield by any fair exegesis. Whatever else may be true as to the nature of the Kingdom and the process by which one enters it, it seems to be incontestable that the Kingdom is a system of social life organized on the basis of voluntary obedience to the will of God, and that the process by which one enters it is the acceptance by the personal human will of the personal divine will as the law of life. If this be true, then manifestly it is impossible that anybody, child or adult, should enter the Kingdom except by an individual, personal act of the will; and this means that it is impossible for the child to be in the Kingdom before it is capable of a personal voluntary act. To assume that one is a member of the Kingdom by natural birth betrays a lack of definiteness in one's conception of the Kingdom; and to read this assumption into the words of Jesus concerning little children is to divert one's mind from their central meaning.

Underlying this interpretation is the group-conception of religion which prevailed in the ancient world. As has been explained elsewhere, a child born into one of the primitive kinship-groups, which were by expansion gradually developed into the nationalities of the ancient world, was *ipso facto* born into the religion of that group.

It is, therefore, a bringing over of that ancient ideal of religion and connecting it in an illogical way with the religion of Jesus when it is maintained that the child by natural birth becomes a member of the Kingdom. But it may be said that if the Kingdom is to issue in a transformed social order in this world, will it not be true that those who are born into that order will also be born into the Kingdom? Here an important and fundamental distinction should be borne in mind. A transformed temporal order of human society—an organization of politics, economics, science and art on the principle of service—can never *constitute* the Kingdom of God. Such an organization of the material and psychic factors of society is required by the Kingdom and must result from its progress, but it *is not* the Kingdom. To say that the temporal social order must be subjected to the law of service is not to say that it will then be identical with the Kingdom. It will no longer stand in opposition to the Kingdom, and will in some sense be utilized as an instrumentality by the Kingdom. But the Kingdom must always in its essence be a spiritual thing, a correlation of human wills within the will of God. It has been truly said by Dr. Kirn: "The will to serve with the whole energy of one's personal power one's neighbour and one's community is not in itself religion, but it is the form of work within the world which ethical religion requires." To be born into a social system conducted on this principle is not

to be born into the Kingdom of God, but such a system of life would tend to lead those born in it into the Kingdom, would be promotive of the Kingdom.

It is equally clear that the other group of interpreters are also at fault and fail to apprehend the most important meaning of the first group of these beautiful passages. They assume that Jesus, after using the child as a type of the mental attitude which it is necessary for His disciples to possess, proceeds to speak about those disciples rather than about the children, and to emphasize the importance of the proper treatment of those disciples rather than the importance of a proper treatment of children. According to this, the passages have no direct and primary bearing upon the question which is so prominent in the thought of our time—the central social significance of the child. There is good reason to regard this as a great mistake.

The chief reason which is assigned for adopting this interpretation are these words of Matthew, "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones, *which believe in me,*" etc. This is taken as conclusive evidence that Jesus was talking here about the disciples typified by the children, and not primarily about the children themselves. But is this conclusive? Is it necessary to take the words, "who believe in me," in the theological sense? Some interpreters who take these words to indicate evangelical saving faith in the theological

sense of the terms tell us that the expression, "except ye be converted," etc., is not to be construed in the theological sense of conversion. For that might fairly imply that the disciples themselves had not been converted in the evangelical sense of the term. But if this expression need not be taken in the technical sense of the term conversion, why must the words, "believe in me," be taken in the technical sense of evangelical saving faith? There is no good reason why they should not be considered as indicating simply the attitude of trusting confidence exhibited by the children toward Him, such an attitude as normal children usually exhibit toward highly benevolent and kindly men. But even if the words should be taken in the more technical sense, it would not necessarily exclude His direct reference to the children. For do not many children believe in Him in the evangelical sense of the word? And may it not have been true of the children to whom He was then referring?

But if there is no convincing positive reason for adopting the view of the first group of interpreters, there are important reasons for rejecting it.

First, it is difficult to carry it through all the passages as a consistent principle of explanation. This is true even in Matthew's account, which lends itself to this interpretation best of all. How, for instance, are the verses 10-14 to be construed in harmony with this interpretation? On this

hypothesis, would they not imply the likelihood, or at least the possibility, that some of the disciples would fall away and be lost? And such a possibility is emphatically rejected by many of the interpreters who so construe the words. But if Jesus is here emphasizing the danger of causing little children to stumble, of turning their little docile lives in wrong directions, instead of leading them as may be so easily done into the Kingdom, the meaning of these verses and the extreme pertinence of them to the whole discussion are entirely obvious. A careful consideration of the passages shows that down to verse 14 the discourse revolves around the child and the terrible sin of causing the child to go astray—the greatest iniquity, perhaps, of which this world is guilty. At verse 15 there is a manifest transition to another thought, the proper method and spirit of dealing with offenses committed by one disciple against another.

But if the interpretation I am criticising meets with difficulty as applied to the passage in Matthew, it fits still less the account given by Mark and Luke. Here, beyond question, the natural course is to take the words as having reference to the children themselves rather than to the disciples typified by the children. Indeed, if we are to take the words of Luke as a true report of the words of Jesus, we are almost compelled to construe this passage as an impressive declaration of the central importance of the child and of

the solemn religious significance of our attitude toward children. "Whosoever shall receive *this* child in my name receiveth me." How could words be more specific? This is indeed the most specific report we have of the words of Jesus on this occasion. Why not take it at its face value? Why not construe the more indefinite words used in the other accounts in the light of this definite statement, instead of the reverse? It is true that Matthew gives a more extended report of the conversation than Luke and goes more into some of the details; but it is quite as possible that Luke's record gives us the actual words used by Jesus as that Matthew's does; and Matthew's words can be legitimately construed in entire harmony with the more obvious meaning of Luke's.

Second, there is another reason for objecting to the interpretation here criticised. Those who adopt it usually treat the phrase, "these little ones," as referring to weak or immature disciples; but that is not consistent. According to that construction of the passage the phrase must be regarded as a designation of all disciples; for surely it is not the weak or immature disciples alone who have the childlike spirit. If childlikeness of temper and attitude are characteristic of the members of the Kingdom, then the strongest and most mature disciples will possess this characteristic in the highest degree. There is, therefore, no consistency in applying the phrase, "these little ones," in an especial way to weak

or immature Christians. But the warning against offending one of these "little ones," and the injunction, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones," sound strangely unnatural as applied to mature, strong disciples, who are supposed to represent the highest type of positive and self-controlled character; and yet it must apply to them if the construction of the passage to which objection is here taken is the correct one. On the other hand, how natural and appropriate are these words if the Master's purpose here is to impress upon us the importance of the child and our responsibility to Him for our treatment of little children, who may be so easily influenced for good or evil!

To sum up, the teaching of these passages seems to me to be: first, that a psychological condition of entrance into and of advancement in the Kingdom is the openness of mind, the teachableness of the normal child; second, Jesus is seeking to impress upon His hearers and upon His disciples of all ages the unspeakable importance and the solemn Christian duty of a proper and helpful treatment of the little child. The child is impressible, easily influenced in right or wrong directions. To pervert a little child is one of the most terrible of all sins. To receive the little child in His name, to appreciate its possibilities, its preciousness in His sight, to love and cherish it in His spirit, and to lead it to know Him who came

to seek and to save all men is a characteristic mark of the Christian spirit.

Modern Psychology teaches us that the child does not come into the world without inherited predispositions; that it is not born upon the spiritual level of life; and that when it arrives at a certain age its mental life needs to be reorganized around a higher centre upon the spiritual plane, and must be, either at this period or later, unless it is to go through its career as a being arrested in its normal development. But Psychology also teaches that normally these predispositions are vague and indefinite in the child and that it is phenomenally suggestible and easily adapts itself to whatever conditions happen to surround it. In short, the human environment in which it is placed has almost absolute control over the child life. It is helpless. It is not without inherited predisposition, both general or racial and individual, and will react to its environment according to this nature; and consequently, if there is a conscious attempt to shape it to a certain pattern or direct its developing energies to a certain goal, the effort, to be successful, must be made according to the laws or innate tendencies of the child's physical and psychic organization. But it is nevertheless true that the social environment is by far the most decisive factor in determining the direction of its development. Even misdirected and unsuccessful, because unin-

telligent, efforts to lead the child in one way may be the real explanation of its taking a different course. Even the individual instances that seem to be exceptions to the general law that the social environment dominates the development of the child, will on closer examination prove to be notable exemplifications of it. Many of them have been carefully studied, and in every case it is found that in the environment there was some stimulus, which, acting upon the child's nature, called forth its indefinite potentialities in a given direction.

If Psychology is correct in its conception of the child, then a new-born generation is little more than a mass of raw human material which society, by its varied suggestions and its organized methods of control, is at once stimulating and shaping for better or for worse. The Future is always lying in the cradle which is rocked by the hand of the Present. Perhaps it would be a more accurate figure to say, the Future is always lying at the breast of the Present. What is a given society doing with its children? The answer to that question will determine whether it is a progressive or a retrogressive society. In what it is doing for and with the children society is at once casting its baleful or beneficent shadow into eternity, and reforming or deforming the temporal social order. At the heart of every social question is the child. All social questions revolve around the cradle. This fact has often been em-

phasized; but social theorists have not taken this point of view with sufficiently definite consciousness of its pivotal importance. Social reformers have not with sufficient clearness grasped childhood as the key to every question. We should confront every theory of society and every proposed practical policy with the query: "What does it mean for the child?" In all our modern theorizing we must do what Jesus did; we must take a little child and set it in the midst, and we must ask ourselves with the utmost solemnity: What are our social ideals, our social policies and our social institutions—what is our whole social order doing to this little child? That is the crucial question for every civilization and every phase of every civilization. There may be other important interests at stake; but however important, they all recede into the background in the presence of this; for in the children the *whole* future is at stake.

Now, if we consider the whole ethical problem of the present social order from this point of view, to what conclusions are we forced? The home is the immediate environment of the child. Through it inevitably play the great forces of the larger human environment which encompasses it, of which it is indeed the very heart. It is a mere truism to say that the home is not an isolated institution. There is no institution in which the customs and ideals of the general social group are more promptly and clearly reflected; and none

which in structure and function is more flexibly responsive to the shaping influence of the general forces and conditions of life. It was once possible, however, in considerable measure, under the shelter of the home, to select the environmental influences that came from outside and reached the child; and that was an extremely important function of the home; but it seems to careful observers that at least three processes which are now going on are restricting more and more narrowly the measure in which that is possible. First, the increasing density of the population—the crowding of people together in tenements and flats, and the closer juxtaposition of the separate domestic establishments. The home becomes less and less isolated, and hence the increasing difficulty of sheltering the child from such outside influences as may seem undesirable to the parents. Second, the progressive removal of various forms of activity from the home to outside institutions, and particularly the work of education. The educational period of life is necessarily lengthening, which means that the *formative period* is lengthening; while at the same time the *formative process,* which is education, has been progressively transferred from the home to the school, where the child is inevitably brought into contact with and is moulded by the great world that lies outside the home. Third, the fact that within a large section of the population both the mother and the children are going out to work. The two chief

influences, as we have seen, leading to this are the transference of economic occupations from the home, and the growing disparity between the workingman's wages and his rising standards of living. The result is that thousands of children are deprived of the sheltering care of the home and thrust out in their tender years to be directly fashioned by the extra-domestic environment. Everything seems, then, to indicate that in modern life the general social order is coming to be more powerful in the direct moulding of the life of the child. Indirectly it has always been potent, moulding the home and through that the child, in which way it is still as effective as ever. Now, however, it is, far more than in times past, immediately potential in the formation of the personality of the child. In a word, the discipline which the child receives within the home life, though relatively restricted, is as much determined by the general social life as it ever was, while the area is greatly extended within which the child is immediately acted upon by the larger social organization.

This situation only renders more acute the question, What stamp is society placing upon this plastic human material? What is this general mould in which the future society is being cast? As the general social order is acting more broadly, in a direct way, upon the child, what does it mean for the child as related to the Kingdom of God? Does it make it easy for the child to enter the

Kingdom? Or does it give to the development of the young life a wrong direction? Does it lead the little one into the life of love and service to God and men, or into a life of secularity, materialism and self-service? Does it "offend" these little ones—that is, cause them to stumble—or stimulate them to desire and strive for the higher spiritual values of life? These are questions that go to the centre of the social problem. It is here that the issue between the Kingdom of God and the social order is raised in its most acute form. If the social order through the various forms of control and discipline which it exercises over children, both mediately through the home and immediately through its direct action upon them, perverts them, it stands under the terrific condemnation of Jesus. That it is doing exactly this for many millions of children is too obvious to require argument. One has but to keep his eyes open as he walks the streets of our cities and towns to see it being done on a scale so large as to appall the thoughtful observer. Let one with his mind directed to this particular phase of the social problem take a stroll through the poorer streets, the tenement districts, the manufacturing sections and the slums of our towns and cities—remembering that in these towns and cities the real processes and tendencies of our civilization come most obviously to light—and the conviction will be forced upon him that, while our social order is not without fair and attractive aspects,

there are at work in the very heart of it forces which are stunting, malforming, mutilating and destroying child life on a colossal scale. It is not that a few children here and there fall victims to accidental maladjustments; that would be tragical enough; but the wholesale perversion and deformation of child life now going on in our centres of population, and in a less striking degree in every other community in the land, is not accidental. It is the working out of forces and processes that are characteristic of our social organization.

Here, for instance, is a baby born in a crowded tenement district. The family into which it is born are poor and ignorant, and live a miserable, meagre life crowded into one or two rooms of a dark building. The little one is underfed from the first time it is laid to its mother's breast; nay, it has suffered from lack of nutrition before its eyes opened upon this world. No light more cheering than the grey twilight that falls gloomily through the dirty windows ever greets its baby eyes, which gaze only upon scenes of filth and squalor. Its little ears are greeted with few soft and tender words, for the mother's heart, though true in its primal instincts, is untouched by refining influences; the gentler, finer sentiments are smothered in her by the harsh and coarse conditions of her life, and her energies are not devoted to the care of the children, but consumed in heavy labour. Perhaps she must go out to work for the

better portion of the day, while the infant is turned over to be kept by an older child, itself immature and yet partly formed—or malformed—by the same conditions and methods of rearing.

When the little one has grown large enough to go out to play, it must seek its pleasures in the dirty streets and alleys in the neighbourhood, along with a gang of others whose infantile experiences have been similar to its own. There in the streets, which are not made for play but for traffic, it is plunged at once into the heart of the great social order, and meets face to face the uniformed representative of that order in the person of the policeman. Nearby are the haunts of vice, the saloon, the brothel, and all the unspeakable dens of infamy. It is not long before its career must take a more definite shape and direction. What will it be? Perhaps laws for compulsory education force it into the schools. But to a child that has been thus neglected and undisciplined, the often unintelligent confinement and discipline of the school are likely to prove extremely irksome and distasteful. The result may be truancy and the crystallization of the character into permanent hostility to all cultural influences. But in many parts of our country there is no law of compulsory education, and the little one receives no scholastic training, good, bad or indifferent. Very soon it is likely to find its way either into a factory, where its young life is stunted, or into a street occupation of some kind, where it forms a premature

and disastrous acquaintance with every form of evil. About the only alternative to going to work in its tender years in the factory or on the street is a career of juvenile vagabondage and delinquency. If it grows up stunted in intelligence and will or becomes a moral pervert, or if it turns into the dark and devious ways of criminality, where should the responsibility for such a perversion be located? Is it not high time for a society, whose membership is composed largely, if not predominantly, of the professed followers of Jesus, to ask itself this question with the most penitential searchings of heart? Innumerable tragedies of this type are occurring every day before our eyes. No doubt one factor in the situation is the personal responsibility of the youth; but is it the main or even a considerable factor? What could be reasonably expected of a child whose existence was begun and continued during its helpless and tender years under such conditions? No doubt, also, a factor in the situation is the responsibility of the parents. But the probability is that they themselves were formed in their infancy by similar conditions. Beyond question, a large factor in the situation is the social order, the system of life under which we live; and the more closely one looks into the whole complex of social relations, the more he will come to feel that this is the largest factor.

If, now, it be true that the social order is forming the child, mediately through its influence upon

the organization and ideals of the home and immediately by its direct contact with the child, and if the mediate influence is becoming relatively less and the immediate relatively more; if it also be true that in both ways, and particularly in the latter, it is stunting and perverting the lives of vast numbers of children, then it becomes the most vital question of social policy: What does society owe to the child? The conscience of our times stresses the responsibility of the individual to society, rather than the responsibility of society to the individual. In dealing with the adults, that is doubtless the proper placing of the emphasis; though, if pressed too far, this one-sided emphasis will be found to involve, even in these cases, a false antithesis. But with respect to the relation of the little child to society, the emphasis certainly ought to be put on the other side. What, then, does society owe to the little one? Or conversely, what are the rights of the child?

First, it has the right to be well-born. One of the crimes against humanity is that many persons are permitted to marry and become parents who, according to biological laws which are coming to be better and better understood, are wholly incapacitated to bring into the world a normal progeny. The offspring of such parentage are foredoomed by the stern laws of nature to abnormality and misery, predetermined to lead a life which is a curse to themselves and to society. From the very beginning of society the institution

of marriage was brought under social control; the forms or methods of control have varied with social interests, real or supposed; and surely now, in the light of modern biological science, the marriage of persons manifestly unfit, physically or mentally, to become parents should be forbidden and prevented. The responsibility for the misery of every life brought into the world through such a union rests in large measure upon society itself. The child has a right to be born of decent and healthful parents.

Second, the child has a right to normal and healthful nourishment and physical surroundings during its tender years. It should have plenty of good food, of light and fresh air, and opportunities for stimulating and helpful play. The dreary blocks of dark and overcrowded tenements, with their accompanying dirty streets and filthy alleys, should be eliminated from our towns and cities. Within these dens—to call them human dwellings is to violate the proprieties of language, just as to exist in them is to violate the decencies of life—within these horrible dungeons is going on a physical, mental and moral "slaughter of the innocents," with a slow and sure and heartless cruelty in comparison with which the method of Herod seems almost like mercy. Society can put a stop to this, and so long as it fails to do so, the responsibility for ten thousand thousand human tragedies rests upon it.

Third, the child has the right to an education

that is adapted to its needs. If the parent is indisposed or unable to afford this opportunity, society should see to it that the child does not suffer an irretrievable loss through parental inability or carelessness or neglect. The suitable nurture of its mind and heart is surely as important for the child as the nurture of its body. If the parents were unable to care for its body, or were too criminally careless to give it food to eat, society would step in to see that the child had a measure, at least, of justice. But its failure to secure for the child the proper care and development of its mind and heart is equally as criminal as to neglect the interests of its body. But note that its education should be "suitable;" the education should be adapted to its needs—not a dull grind of discipline which is utterly meaningless to the child, because consciously related to none of its interests, or perhaps even revolting because opposed to every instinct in its constitution. Here educational science is casting a welcome and increasingly clear light upon the true way, and in that light the public authorities who superintend the function of education should walk. We are bound by the principles of Jesus to see to it, in some way or other, that every child secures the inestimable boon of an education suited to its physical, intellectual and moral needs.

The foregoing are the primary and fundamental rights of the child, and yet they do not exhaust the obligations of society to its little ones.

That duty can never be fulfilled until the whole social order is organized on the principles of Jesus. And yet the shortest practicable road to the complete transformation of human society into the ideal of the Kingdom of God lies through the intellectual, moral, and religious education of the young, taking the word "education" in its broadest meaning. Upon this strategic point all those who are working for the reconstruction of the social order so as to secure universal brotherhood and righteousness should concentrate their forces. If once we can bring up a generation of men in whose young minds this great ideal has been deeply imbedded, we shall have turned the page which will open a new chapter in the age-long striving of man for a just and brotherly order of society.

The ancient world did not appreciate the child; at most, its appreciation of the child was unusual and exceptional before Jesus came. In pre-Christian times the child was thought of more as an asset, and was little valued for its intrinsic personal worth. He "took the little child and set it in the midst"—and taught the world the lesson, which His own disciples have been strangely slow to learn, that the child is the central and most significant being in society. In this He anticipated the thought of the ages. The modern sciences of Psychology and Sociology are tardily confirming His wisdom, which for centuries was obscured in the dust of theological controversy.

In many matters, and in none more than in this, it is the profound simplicity of Jesus which often prevents our understanding and following Him. As soon as we shall have brought all the children to Him, and inculcated His spirit in them, which it is so easy to do, we shall have solved the problem of the Kingdom and of human society.

CHAPTER VI

THE STATE

What was the attitude of Jesus toward the state? Or what are the civil and political implications of His ethical principles? Intimations of the answer to these questions have several times been given in preceding chapters; but the matter is of such great importance and there has been so much confusion as well as serious misunderstanding with respect to it, that it will be well to take it up for special consideration. It has been seriously maintained by some eminent authorities that Jesus taught a doctrine which by implication is opposed to the state, or which, at any rate, "casts aside the state as worthless." And a number of able writers take the position that the failure to enjoin patriotism and other specifically civic duties is a defect in the ethic of Jesus which renders it unsuitable as a basis of social organization. What is the truth of the matter?

At the outset one confronts the fact that according to the records Jesus uttered not one significant word concerning the state; and there is no apparent reason why such an utterance would not have been remembered and recorded. On one occasion His enemies sought to entrap Him into some compromising statement on the subject of

the Roman tax; and some writers, who are evidently anxious to supply this apparent deficiency in His teaching, have striven to deduce from His reply a doctrine as to the state. But in vain. His answer is, at best, enigmatical. It is quite probable that He meant it to be equivocal or, at any rate, indecisive; that He intentionally avoided being drawn into the heated political discussions of the times. In the circumstances that surrounded Him, how could He have made any application of His principles to political conditions without being diverted from His central purpose, which was fundamentally religious? He simply refused to be so diverted. He said, in effect, "You are under the dominion of Cæsar, as is shown by the fact that you are using the Roman coin; so pay the tribute which is imposed upon you," and thus declined to pursue the subject further. This, at any rate, is quite as probable an explanation of His silence on these subjects as the theory that He was so naïve in His views of life and was speaking with reference to such simple social conditions that He was unconscious of the state and its problems. He made applications of His principles only to the specific situations presented to Him. The specific political situation which confronted Him was such that He could not have discussed it without raising issues which would have sidetracked His whole programme into a political movement and swamped it forever. He steered so entirely clear of the question that when,

at the end, His enemies sought to secure His destruction on the ground that He was attempting to lead a political revolution, the Roman Governour, who would naturally have had information regarding such an undertaking and would have been especially sensitive as to that matter, dismissed the charge even without serious investigation.

It may be claimed, of course, that it was not such considerations as these that deterred Him; that His answer to Pilate is itself a demonstration that He was wholly absorbed in otherworldly thoughts, and that His programme had in His mind no relation whatever to the affairs of earthly governments. This is more plausible than conclusive. The words, "My Kingdom is not of this world," might bear the meaning that His Kingdom had no significance for the temporal order of society. But they might equally well mean and, taken in connection with the body of His teaching, most probably did mean, that His Kingdom, although including the temporal order within its scope, was founded on a principle, made use of means and was motived by an aim which radically distinguished it from the political dominions that arise out of the struggle of selfish human interests; that He did not propose to substitute for the Roman rule another which was in principle like it.

If His movement, then, had any significance for the state, it must be found in the implications

of His religious and ethical doctrines, taken as universal principles of action. If so taken, would these principles be inconsistent with political government? Would they disintegrate the state? There are not wanting those who claim that they would. It is argued, for instance, that if men should practice His doctrine of non-resistance to evil they would be estopped from making an appeal to the law for the maintenance of their individual rights; or if the injunction, "Judge not that ye be not judged," were adopted as a universal principle of action, the state could not condemn and punish criminals. The whole system of legal restraint and punishment would collapse. Civil society would be disintegrated. The government, which is the conservator of the interests of all, could not exercise this function, which is essential to the preservation of social order. Absolute anarchy would result. Men cannot live together without law; law cannot be made effective except by the use of force; but the principle of Jesus as applied to the collective life implies the organization of society on the basis of love and of moral influence. What then? Law disappears and the state ceases to exist. Thus the argument runs.

Two problems, then, have to be faced. First, the absence in the ethic of Jesus of any teaching concerning the function and value of the state and concerning civic duties. Second, the alleged inconsistency of His ethical principles with the very

existence of the state. In the consideration of them, let us take the second problem first.

The injunctions, "resist not evil" and "judge not," are special developments of His general law of love. It would be unintelligent, if not positively stupid to interpret them with bald literalness. Can we suppose that He meant to be taken according to the letter when He said, "Whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also," and "If any man will sue thee at law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also," and "Whosoever will compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain"? To do so is to assume that He went as far as the Pharisees themselves in laying down petty rules as to the minutiæ of conduct; whereas, it is certain that He contended most vigourously against this very practice. This mode of speech was that customarily used by popular teachers of His race and time. What He meant is plain enough when it is borne in mind that He was substituting His law of love for the ancient law of retaliation in dealing with offenders. What He said, in effect, was this, "When dealing with one who has injured you, be governed not by resentment, but by goodwill for the evil-doer." It is only the statement in another form of the injunction, "Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you." It is manifestly an application of the law of love to

the conduct of His followers who live and suffer maltreatment in an evil social order. Similarly, the injunction, "Judge not that ye be not judged," is directed against the censorious disposition, and bids His followers look inward and correct their own faults rather than busy themselves in detecting and correcting the faults of others.

But if these particular injunctions be construed as referring to the personal conduct of His followers, the broader problem is not thereby solved; for it cannot be fairly disputed that He intended the principle of love to become a universal law of conduct. The question then recurs, "Can love be made the basis of the collective organized life of men?" Can the state in particular be organized and conducted on the basis of universal goodwill? The question may be answered from two different points of view.

In the first place, we may consider the question with reference to the ideal state which is gradually to be realized. As the Kingdom progresses, love more and more pervades and controls all the relations of men. And when the Kingdom becomes a realized fact, love will be the informing principle of the organization of the state, as of all other functions of the collective life. But in a society so constituted would there be any longer a function for the state to perform? If society had been transformed and elevated to the point where all its members acted on the prin-

ciple of love, would there be any need for law? Would not coercion be out of the question? It seems certain that in such an ideal situation the coercive activity of the state would disappear. It would no longer be necessary to restrain men from injuring one another, nor to compel them to perform their obligations to one another. "Love is the fulfilling of the law," of all righteous civil as well as moral law.

But it is a mistake to suppose that even under such conditions social organization would cease, or that the state as the central and directive organ of the social body would disappear. The social organization would become wholly co-operative and constructive in method and motive; which implies, of course, that the state would be thoroughly democratic in spirit and constitution. It is not improbable, by the way, that the essential tendency of the ideal of Jesus toward democracy is the particular feature which leads some thinkers, whose political conceptions are cast in the mould of the aristocratic and militaristic state, to assume that the Christian ethic would disintegrate the state. We grant that it would disintegrate that sort of a state. But were that ideal realized, the energies of men would still need to be organized in innumerable forms of co-operation for the common weal, though compulsion would not be needed anywhere. The state would still be needed as the central institution in which all others would be

correlated. Law would not cease to be; it would still be needed as the collective definition of functional duties; though for getting those duties done there would be required neither soldiers, nor policemen, nor courts, nor prisons. Already there are many members of society who render free obedience to the laws, even to those which they regard as mistaken; not because they fear punishment, but because they have the social disposition. Has the law ceased to exist for them? Not at all. Has it ceased to exist for them as imperative? No; it is accepted by them as the social definition of functional duty; and it is obeyed from a sense of social duty. They are dutifully minded. Just as for the truly Christian man the moral law does not cease to exist as an objective imperative because it has been embodied in his moral nature as a subjective disposition; so in such a society as is here contemplated the law defining social duties would exist as a social imperative, but would be voluntarily obeyed. In short, the state would cease to exist only in the sense of an external coercive institution requiring the use of force to secure obedience. Love, expressing itself in the desire to co-operate for the common weal, would be its informing spirit.

One's view of the world must needs be shadowed by heavy clouds of pessimism for him to deny that on the whole society has made considerable progress toward this ideal, and is still developing in that direction. Slowly but surely the law of love

works like leaven in political and legal thought. Relatively, at any rate, the conception of the state as a coercive institution declines, and the conception of it as a constructive co-operation for the common weal ascends. Relatively the number increases of those who obey the law freely from a sense of social duty and not from the sense of compulsion. The most pervasive anl powerful movement in political life sets squarely in the direction of moralizing all the functions of the state. So vast and all-compelling is the tendency that by those who look deep into the present social movement the ideal of the Christian state is no longer smiled at as a Utopian dream of the simple-minded. And yet that ideal is far enough from realization. To "the practical man" it is like blowing soap-bubbles to speculate as to whether such a state is conceivable or will ultimately become possible; and to fix one's attention on that far-off goal looks to him like an evasion of the actual problems of the state.

Is, then, the application of the law of love to the administration of the state practicable at the present stage in social development? All the citizens of the state are not controlled by a sense of social duty. The state must deal with the unsocial and the anti-social. Offenses are committed and the offenders must be punished. Law must rest upon the basis of force. Only thus is social order possible. To discontinue the use of force would be to leave all socially-minded citizens a

prey to the selfish impulses of the anti-social; and that would mean a sudden drop into a state of savagery such as has never existed in human history. In fact, it would be the abolition of human society. The conclusion would then seem to be that, at any stage of social progress short of absolute perfection, it is impracticable to make the law of love the sole principle of organized social control.

But is not this conclusion a *non sequitur?* Is the use of force as a means of social control necessarily inconsistent with the law of love? Essentially love is a matter of disposition and motive, not of method and means. Love and laxity should not be identified. To love another does not necessarily mean to let him do as he pleases. Especially is this true when it is a question of social control. The parent may find it necessary, in the very exercise of love, to use force in the control of the child. The state uses force in the control of the insane, but that does not signify that our asylums are the expression of collective hostility to the unfortunate inmates. On the same principle, crime may be punished; and this does not imply that criminality is a form of insanity. Doubtless it sometimes is, and doubtless it often is not. But entirely apart from the question as to the relation of crime to insanity, the criminal may be dealt with according to the law of love. Law may be conceived and executed and criminals punished in the spirit of good-will.

It is entirely practicable that the whole process of administering law should aim not only at the protection and well-being of the socially-minded members of society, but also at the good of the anti-social. By this is meant that it should seek to reclaim delinquents to good citizenship, a result which in a great number of cases is certainly attainable, if at the beginning of the criminal career the penalty is so inflicted as to develop in the offender a disposition friendly rather than hostile to society.

Society, it is true, has not always, nor perhaps usually, acted upon this principle. One of the darkest chapters in the history of human society has been the administration of criminal law, as every one who has made a study of the subject will freely admit. If there is to-day a tendency toward sentimental laxity in the exercise of this important social function, it is the natural reaction against the irrational severity and savage vengefulness which once were so general. Until quite recent times society usually dealt with the criminal in the spirit of hostility and vindictiveness. It exhibited a brutal indifference to his welfare and a savage cruelty in the infliction of penalty. Punishment was worse than retaliation —exact retaliation would often have been mercy in comparison. Penalties were affixed to deeds which were out of all reasonable proportion to the resulting social injury. We are told that when Blackstone wrote his Commentaries there were

one hundred and sixty offenses punishable by death. Even socially helpful conduct was often rewarded with a cruel hostility which opened the dungeon or lighted the flames of the stake for a man who offended popular prejudices in the interest of progress—a barbarity from which our enlightened age has not wholly freed itself. But aside from this fact—which is referred to only as showing that society acted in the spirit of vindictiveness toward all who did not conform to the existing standard of conduct—real offenders were treated with an inhumanity revolting to Christian sentiments.

In primitive society, before the state was organized, every offense was avenged by the injured party or by his kin, who felt responsible for him. With the development of the state this responsibility was gradually assumed by it, and an increasing number of offenses came to be recognized as committed against society. In the punishment of them the state was impelled by the motive of vengeance, just as the primitive kinship-group had been, and the sentiment of hostility to the offender was hardly checked by any other consideration. The penalties were always severe and often extravagant in their cruelty. For instance, we are told that in ancient India "the terminology was lacking for distinguishing civil misdemeanors from real crimes; it seems that all offenses were in the same degree misdeeds which called for penalties;" and the punishments in-

flicted were of the most horrible kinds,—"frequently not only death, but death 'exasperated' or 'qualified;' by the stake, by fire, by the teeth of dogs, by the feet of elephants, by the cutting of razors." And this was characteristic of early society in general. In the ancient Jewish polity, which was not an exceptionally severe one, capital punishment was attached to a great number of offenses, and took such forms as stoning, hanging, burning, strangling, crucifixion, drowning, sawing asunder, precipitation from an elevated place, etc. Durkhiem has maintained that there is a constant relation between the severity of the penalties and the structure of societies; that in proportion as societies are less complicated, less differentiated and organized, and the power of government is concentrated in a single head, punishments are more terrible. It is probable that there is such a general relation between the social organization and the method and spirit of administering criminal law. At any rate, it is certain that for the greater part of human history society in the imposition of penalties has been actuated by the motive of reprisal and the sentiment of retaliation rather than by the purpose to do good to the offender as well as to all its members. Even late in the nineteenth century a distinguished writer on criminal law said: "I think it highly desirable that criminals should be hated, that punishment inflicted upon them should be so contrived as to give expression to that hatred, and

to justify it as far as the public provision of means for expressing and gratifying a healthy natural sentiment can justify and encourage it."

But at the present time the Christian sentiment is penetrating this function of the state. It is coming to be recognized that force may be used as the instrumentality of benevolence as well as of hate; that in punishing the wrongdoer the state may just as well seek to do him good as to seek to do him retributive injury. Of course, it should be borne in mind that the observance of this principle is quite a different thing from the sentimentality which converts the convict into a melodramatic hero whose untimely fate calls for the sympathetic tears of silly women and weak men. The administration of law is different from a theatrical performance.

In seeking to substitute a Christian for an anti-Christian motive in the infliction of punishment, it is not necessary to assume that in the divine administration penalty is always reformatory rather than retributive in purpose. That is another question. The point here insisted on is that the state can and should be actuated in the infliction of punishment by the desire to do good to the violators of its laws. Whether or not in the final judgment upon human conduct, in the eternal world, punishment shall have for its purpose the exact equating of consequences with deeds, apart from all other considerations, it is

certainly not the proper duty of the state to undertake the rôle of final and absolute judge of human merit and demerit. Its judgment should always be relative, because it cannot assume that its laws are the embodiment of absolute right; and it should never leave out of consideration the benefit of those whom it adjudges guilty of violating its statutes. For the reason that its laws and judgments are relative, that its knowledge is always limited and partial, it is subject to the moral principle enunciated in the words, "Judge not that ye be not judged;" that is, the state cannot or should not undertake to evaluate moral character. No human wisdom is equal to that task. In the treatment of offenders the state can take into consideration motives, so far as it is practicable for a human tribunal to determine them, and in so far passes a judgment upon character. But the court considers and judges character not as to its final or absolute significance in relation to the constitution of the moral universe, but only as to its significance in relation to a particular social system, which is itself a relative and changing thing. For the most part, the court must limit its judgment to overt acts and to them only as related to a civil statute, which defines a present and temporary adjustment of men to one another. It is manifest, then, that the judgments of the state are necessarily partial and, in so far as they touch character, relative and tentative. When, there-

fore, it brings into the exercise of this function a hostile or censorious temper toward the offender, it is sure to become unjust and tyrannical.

The state cannot even assume an attitude of indifference toward the offender without injustice. For he is a member of society. He has become what he is within the complex of social relations in which he has lived. In the light of the modern science of social relations the question is bound to arise, How far is society itself responsible for the perversion of his life? That the responsibility for this perversion rests in some measure upon society there can no longer be any question. The legal systems of the past have seemed to be almost, if not wholly, destitute of any consciousness of social responsibility for crime. The tendency is now, perhaps, to swing to the opposite extreme, to deny personal responsibility and put the onus wholly upon society. Either extreme is an error. The truth seems to be that the responsibility should be divided between the individual and the group. But the individual life is so implicated in the group-life that only infinite wisdom could draw the line between the individual and the social shares of the responsibility. An individual has gone wrong and violated the law. An absolutely just judgment upon him would take into consideration, first, his antecedents—for his life is deeply rooted in many lives that have gone before; second, the influences that went to the shaping of his personality in his tender years—

because then he was almost like clay in the hands of environing forces; third, the peculiar stress of the conditions under which he committed the lawless act—for, although the evil tendency is within him, it is not developed except under the stimulus of some specific situation. Out of the complicated mesh of past and present influences, the thread of his free-agency would have to be disentangled.

It is needless to say that for this no man nor human tribunal is competent. But the important consideration is that the manifest fact of social responsibility ought to influence profoundly the attitude of the state toward the violators of its law; and that in two ways. First, it places a heavy moral obligation on the state in the imposition of penalty to aim at the welfare or benefit of the criminal as well as at the general welfare of society—and these two aims will be found on close examination not only to be parallel, but to coincide. The welfare of society cannot be conserved if the good of the offender is neglected. In the second place, it imposes upon the state the obligation to pursue such policies and secure, as far as is humanly possible, such an environment as will not only not pervert the character of its citizens, *i. e.*, will not stimulate into overt activity their latent tendencies to wrong-doing, but will encourage and strengthen them in social living. This is a matter of capital importance. If the state will recognize this obligation and pursue

this constructive policy of building up an environment favourable to social conduct on the part of its citizens, the result will be a great reduction in the number of criminals; and its coercive and repressive activity will become less and less important and consume less and less of its time and energy.

It is then entirely practicable that the state's whole policy with respect to its own citizens should be governed by the principle of good-will. It is gratifying to observe that it is not only practicable, but that the theory and practice of civic administration is actually moving over to this basis. Of course, it could not be reasonably expected that such a transition should be made without serious obstruction. The difficulties lie not so much in bringing the state to a Christian attitude toward violators of the law as it does in bringing it to adopt constructive policies that will prevent crime. The trouble arises from the close interrelation of the state with economic life as now organized. There has been for a long time prevalent a political philosophy which regards it as the chief function of the state to safeguard the title to property acquired under a system of unregulated competition. It contends that the state should exercise only a minimum of control over the method of accumulating wealth, limiting its supervision of this process strictly to two points: the maintenance of the formal freedom of making contracts and the enforce-

ment of contracts, while it concentrates attention and power upon securing to the owner the title to the property so acquired.

This policy has resulted in a monstrous inversion of values. Under modern conditions freedom of contract often becomes an empty form, a hollow mockery; and in the defence of an equally formal private title to property the health and even the lives of others are sacrificed. Property is made more sacred than man. Human beings are immolated on the altar of property-right. It is here that the state comes into the most direct and irreconcilable antagonism with the Christian spirit. The situation has become most anomalous. It is sometimes claimed that crimes against the person are decreasing in number, relative to the population, while crimes against property are increasing. But as a matter of fact, by far the greater number of serious wrongs done to the persons of men are to-day committed in the accumulation of wealth under the sanction of the law. The lives of thousands of employees are annually sacrificed to the greed of corporations, and the most precious human interests of tens of thousands of little children are daily coined into dividends—all legally offered up as victims on the altar of those twin divinities of our modern jurists, the sacred freedom of contract, and the inviolable title to property. If, as is claimed, crimes against property are increasing, it may be interpreted as a natural and in-

evitable reaction against the inhumanity of this modern cult. It is not incredible that crimes against property are increasing because the most numerous and serious of the wrongs against the person are legalized practices in the accumulation of property.

Now, no rational mind can be persuaded that such an abnormal situation is necessary and unchangeable. The really impracticable thing is to continue to maintain social order on this basis. The consecration of property and the desecration of human life cannot be pillars of an enduring state. The endeavour to perpetuate the policy will inevitably result in the violation of the sacredness of property. It is a warning writ large before the eyes of all men. Being interpreted, it is a declaration of the truth that the *right* to property cannot be permanently maintained unless it represents in the eyes of men some approximation to *righteousness*. To thoughtful observers it is growing more and more manifest that it is not only practicable but necessary for the state to adopt a policy in harmony with the Christian principle. So far is the ethic of Jesus from being incompatible with the existence of the state that the stability of the state can be assured only by its adoption. No opposition, no obstruction, no specious reasoning, no appeal to musty precedents, no bribery of public servants can stop the movement in that direction. The appeal to the conservative instincts of the people will not

avail; it is the most profound conservative instinct itself from which the movement springs, the instinct to conserve essential and fundamental human values.

But it is time to turn to a consideration of the second problem—the failure of the ethic of Jesus to inculcate civic duties. If what has been said be true, the objection is already answered for the most part. Civic duties are but the application of His principles to civic life. The value of the state, as of any other institution, lies in the service it performs in the conservation and promotion of the great human interests; and these interests can be conserved and promoted only in the practice of His principle of loving righteousness. He said nothing about loyalty to the state; but those who accept His principles can never be lacking in loyalty to the state so long and so far as the state performs its duty, however imperfectly, of conserving fundamental human interests. It is immoral to require that loyalty on any other ground. He said nothing as to patriotism. But however much patriotism may be magnified, the fact remains that it is a relative virtue. It is highly prized in proportion to the sense of opposition, actual or potential, between one's own and other countries. It has its maximum value when the opposition develops into overt hostility and the safety of the special interests of the nations calls for the unconditional devotion of all their members. As the sense of opposition of national

interests declines, the distinctively patriotic feeling also declines.

In a word, patriotism is a function of the group-consciousness. As this broadens and extends beyond the limits of one's special group, his attachment to it is modified by the sense of community of interests with a wider circle. If the expansion continues until one's social consciousness becomes coterminous with humanity, he will normally feel still a special attachment to his particular national or sectional group, but he will love it not as *against* the rest of the world, but as *for* the rest of the world. He will value it on account of its value to universal humanity. The centre of gravity of his devotion will no longer be his fractional group, but mankind. He will love his fellow-citizens primarily because they are men, not because they are American, or English, or German, or French. He may find pleasure in the peculiar national flavor of their humanity, but humanity will be to him the supreme interest, and more and more will his appreciation of the particular type be conditioned by his estimate of its value as a contribution toward the perfection of the human type. What is my country worth to the world? What can it do for the uplift of all men? These are questions which will more and more enter into his appraisement of his own nationality, or of any other group with which he may be identified.

There is every reason to suppose that Jesus

had this feeling for His own people. But He did not inculcate the virtue of patriotism, because He sought to develop the passion for humanity; and the patriotism which cannot be absorbed into this higher devotion is, to say the least, of relative and temporary value and is useful only in a state of group-conflict, overt or latent, which it was the mission of His religion to bring to an end. Under the dominance of His spirit the different nations will no longer stand confronting one another in a tense attitude of opposition. Their frontiers will no longer be marked by lines of fortresses bristling with cannon; across their boundaries will go on the free interchange of material and spiritual values. Their loyal citizens will no longer be drafted and drilled into mighty war machines for killing their enemies, but will be trained to the far more worthy task of communicating their best achievements to all others. The test of their loyalty will no longer be their readiness to die in defense of their country, but their enthusiasm in converting its peculiar treasures into universal possessions. This sort of patriotism is not only not absent from the ethic of Jesus; it is central in it.

It needs to be said again and again that by far the most important and abiding, if not the only, benefit that has resulted from group-conflicts has been the communication of whatever social values each possessed. In war, tribes and nations have learned to know one an-

other and have learned from one another. When incorporation and amalgamation have taken place, it has been the real human values brought by each into the union that have enriched the resultant civilization. It may be granted that this communication of values had better be accomplished by means of conflict than not at all, but surely human experience has demonstrated, and is ever demonstrating on a larger scale, that it may be far better accomplished by friendly and peaceful intercourse; that good-will is superior to war as a method of universalizing whatever of special worth may be possessed by a particular people. This truth is slowly sinking into the consciousness of nations. A world-consciousness is developing; and corresponding to it a world-conscience is crystallizing, and it is crystallizing around the fundamental principle of the ethic of Jesus—universal good-will. War—and every form of conflict between men—is more and more coming under the prohibition of this conscience; and the particular form of patriotism which has its genesis in the unfriendly opposition of nations is growing weaker, while that form of it which is tributary to the passion for humanity is growing stronger as the spirit of the Son of man spreads through the hearts of men and draws them into a universal and ethical brotherhood.

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